

Got a CD drive? – Get this!

Your definitive guide to the very latest multimedia titles

cd•rom

USER

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EXCLUSIVE REPORT:

the future of CD music

Christmas presence!

*What to buy the PC owning
family for Christmas*

Screen Savers

*Wierd and whacky ways
to protect your screen*

Black Box

*The home PC becomes an
addition to the living room*

Also in this issue:

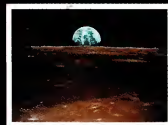
- Nine Month Miracle
- Poisonous Plants
- Voyage round Italy
- Voyage round Egypt
- Flying Fingers
- Casper
- Treasure Island
- Phantasmagoria
- – and loads more...

Reviewed inside:



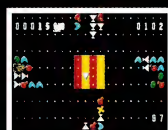
Worms

*The best game in the
world, ever?*



Redshift 2

*Look to the skies,
the truth is out there*



Zoop

*Could this be the most
addictive puzzle game
since Tetris?*



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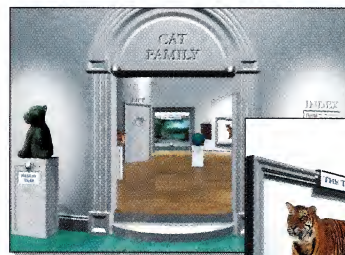
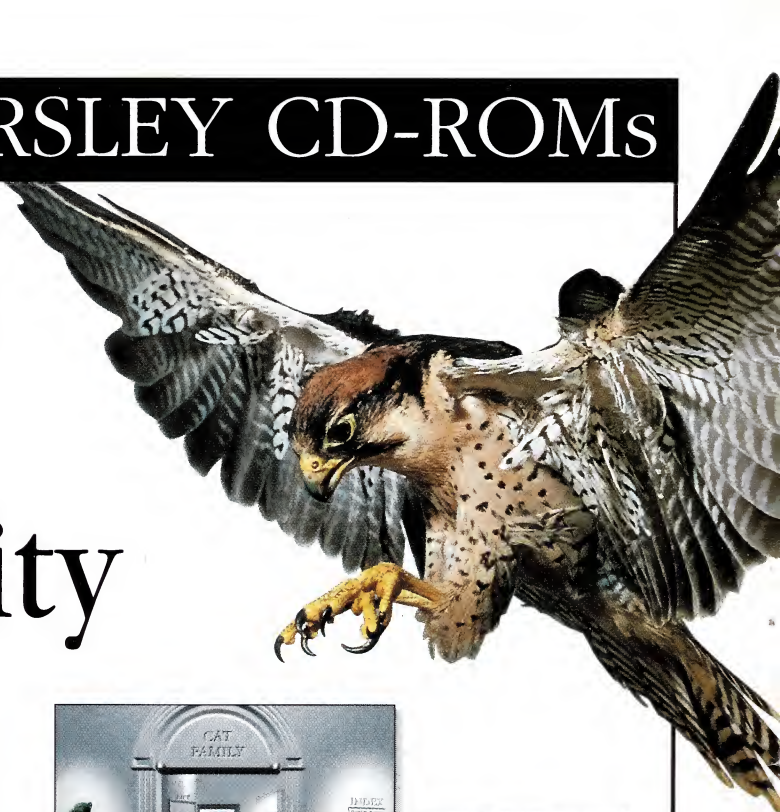
NO CD-ROM? – PLEASE ASK YOUR
NEWSAGENT FOR ONE RIGHT NOW!

What's on your disc? Turn to the back cover ▶▶▶▶

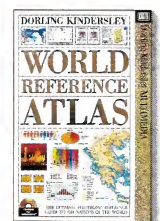
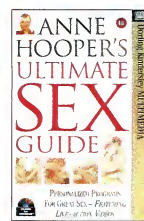
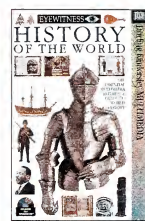
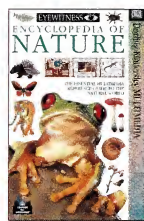
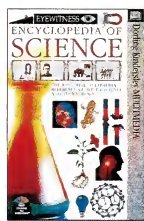
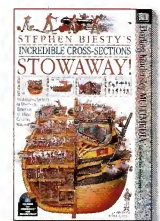
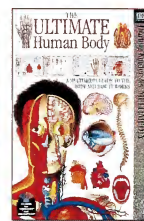
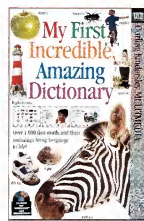
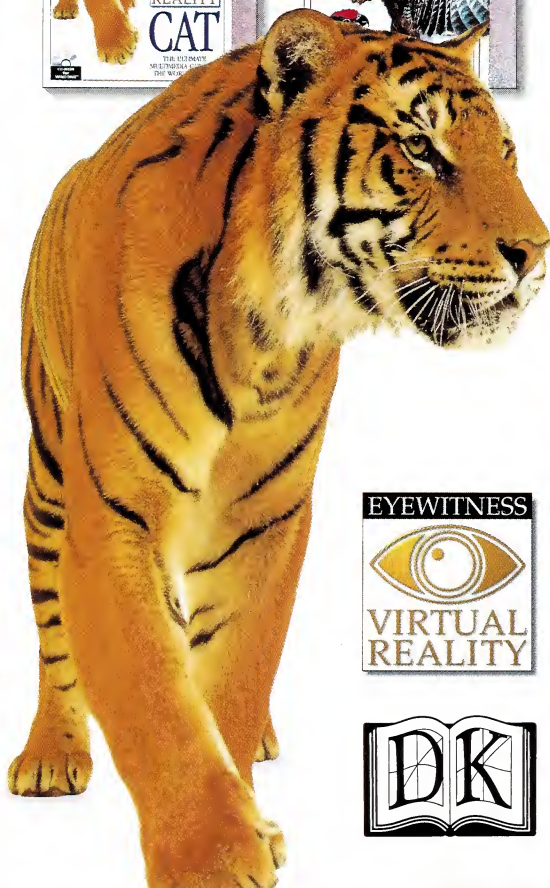
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**Merry
Christmas
and a
Happy
New Year
from all at
CD-ROM User**

cd·rom USER

Issue 18 at-a-glance

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Here's all you need to know to run your cover CD. Packed with over 600Mb of quality demos, software and other goodies

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Catch up on all the latest news updates from the world of CD-ROM and beyond. Featuring news of the EC's plans to increase the price of CD-ROM drives and much more

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The lowdown on all the latest multimedia and games including *Nine Month Miracle*, *Casper*, *Phantasmagoria*, *Worms*, *Zoop* and more

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Why trudge down to the shops every month when you could have your favourite magazine delivered to your door? Save money and get free gifts at the same time. Turn to page 66 now

Back Issues 68

Get your collection up to date from our Back Issues department. All of the available issues will be sent to your door.

Reader Survey 70

Your chance to tell us exactly what you think of CD-ROM User and maybe even win a prize

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Next Month 82

A glimpse of the future as we reveal what's up and coming in the next issue of *CD-ROM User*. Order your copy today!

Welcome to CD-ROM User.

The times, they are
a-changin'



EXCLUSIVE REPORT

CD+

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The future of the CD is being challenged by a new standard. We bring you the EXCLUSIVE lowdown of what it means to the multimedia PC

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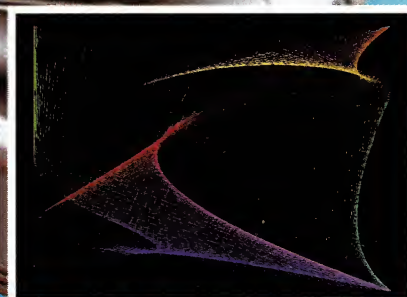
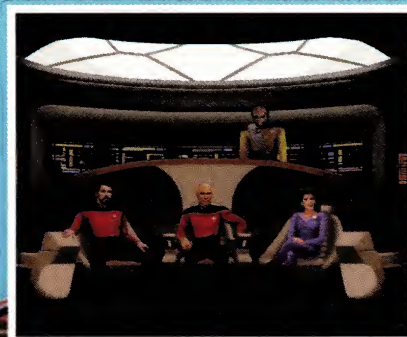
Screen Savers

Colour monitors don't suffer from the old problem of 'burn-in', so are screen savers useful utilities or a waste of your time?

News Special

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New Windows 95 products and other goodies from the biggest software company in the world



Nine Month Miracle

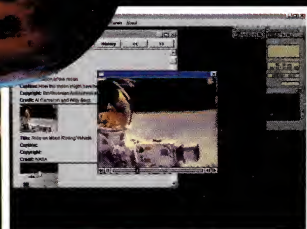
The wonders of birth revealed from conception to delivery in this new CD-ROM experience



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Redshift 2

The best just got better! The award-winning program has been updated and improved!



Worms

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Could this be the best game ever? A contender for the Lemmings crown? Check out this latest addictive craze on page 52



Envision

The latest hardware from Olivetti proves that the PC is well and truly destined for the home

Get in touch!

Call us on 01202 299900
fax 01202 299955
or e-mail cdromuser@paragon.co.uk

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The latest, including a four disc autochanger

Special 

Merry Christmas
from your favourite
CD-ROM magazine

Well, it's Christmas. The time of year when you get presents you don't want, spend time with people you don't particularly like, listen to Slade, Wizzard and John Lennon on the radio and eat too much. Not to mention the booze!

Just like last year and the year before, you've promised that this time it'll be different, but it turns out just the same, doesn't it?

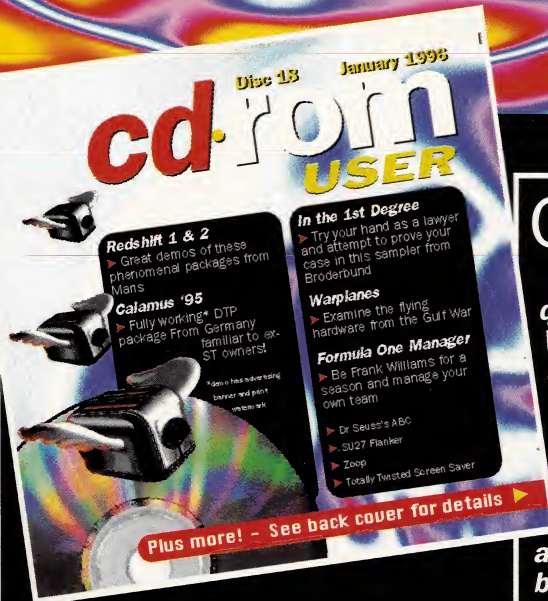
Maybe it doesn't have to. Drop this issue on the coffee table and open it to the page that has what you'd really like for Christmas. Start dropping hints about how useful it would be if you owned the Penthouse disc or the Chippendales screen saver. You could even drop hints about buying a new CD-ROM cookbook. Of course, it could be the other way round and it could be you wanting to travel to Paris for a romantic weekend and the other half wanting a new DIY manual!

Whatever you want for Christmas, I hope you get it and in the meantime, Merry Christmas and a happy New Year from all of us here at CD-ROM User.

Me? I don't think Santa's got room in his sack for what I want!

Be seeing you,
Tony Kaye
Editor





Quick Start

To get the disc up and running quickly, open the File menu from Windows Program Manager then select Run and type D:\CDUSER (if your CD drive is not D: enter the appropriate drive letter). Click on OK to get the simple menuing system up and running.

Alternatively, the menuing system and all the programs on the disc can be run directly from File Manager by clicking on the appropriate files. A full listing of all the programs, their locations and executable files is included in the menuing system and also in a file CDLIST.TXT which is in the FILES directory on the disc.

Disc pages

About the Disc

The menuing system on the disc and most of the items on it require Windows to run. Wherever possible the programs will run directly from the CD, but a few of them do need to transfer files to your hard disk.

Some programs need a lot of free lower memory to run, so we have designed the menuing system to drop out when executing these. When you have finished, you will exit to the program or File Manager.

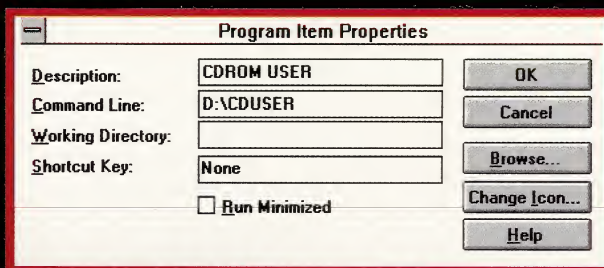
To run the disc, we recommend a minimum specification of 386SX, 4Mb of RAM, VGA colour monitor running at 640x480 in 256 colour mode, DOS 5.0, Windows 3.x, 580k free lower memory and 1Mb EMS.

All the programs have been tested in Windows 3.11 on a 486 DX 66MHz with 8Mb of RAM and worked fine in this configuration.

If you are having problems with a program check first to make sure no other programs are interfering with it and that you have enough free memory.

Installing an Icon

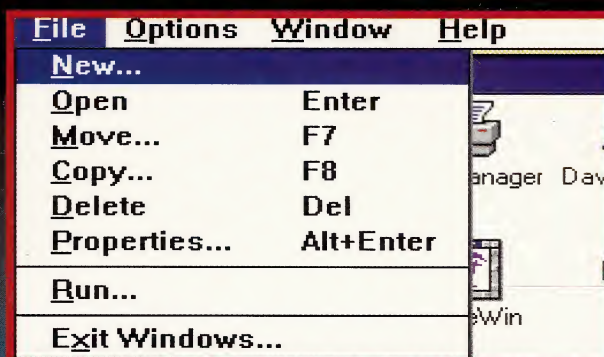
This method will not install any files to your hard disk and the code created disappears when the icon is deleted. The icon will work with all our future disks, so you only need to install it once. During this procedure, error messages saying that the program may not be there later



▲ Type CD-ROM USER in the description box and then your drive letter and the program name CDUSER as the command line. Click on Change Icon to allocate an icon to the program from those provided with Windows, such as the CD icon and then click on OK. This will produce an icon called CD-ROM USER on the desktop

will appear. This is normal - ignore them and the icon will be installed anyway.

▼ From Program Manager click on File, select New and when the New Program Object box appears select Program item and the click on OK



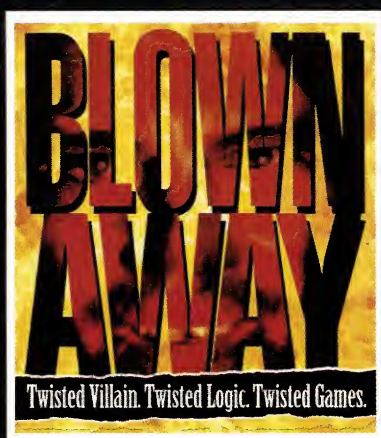
Blown Away

Publisher: Daze Marketing
Tel: (0171) 372 7435



▲ *Don't mess with the psycho. It's just not healthy*

With plenty of full motion animations and the first five of the twenty four of the complete game this fully playable version will exercise your mind, not just your trigger finger. You've got to think and work fast to complete the puzzles in time, or your nemesis, Justus, will win. You can't allow that...



► *One wrong move and you're 'Blown Away'*

In the 1st Degree

Publisher: Broderbund
Tel: (01753) 620909

In this animation based demonstration of the game, see behind the scenes of the making of this new interactive adventure. A murder has been committed, the guilty must brought to trial. The facts have been assembled by your investigator, you must put them together and take it to court.

▼ *You've got to question the suspects, before and during the trial to get the truth*



In The 1st Degree™
DEMO
Someone's Dead.
Someone's Lying.
Can You Prove Murder One?

▲ *There are no innocents, just degrees of guilt*

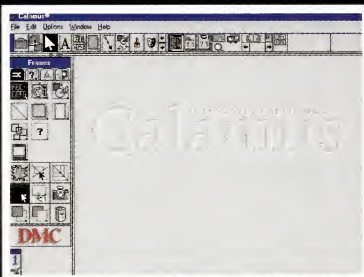
Calamus '95

Publisher: JCA Europe Ltd
Tel: (01734) 452416

For Windows '95 only comes this fully working 32 bit Desk Top Publishing solution. This fully working 'welcome' edition will publicise Calamus on any printed output. Aimed at the SoHo (Small office, Home office) market it includes a number of graphic enhancement tools and full text support, as well as high quality output to printers.

Written specifically for Windows'95 this DTP package will take full advantage of the facilities of the latest operating system with its module based design.

Requires: Windows '95, 80486 CPU and min 8Mb of RAM.

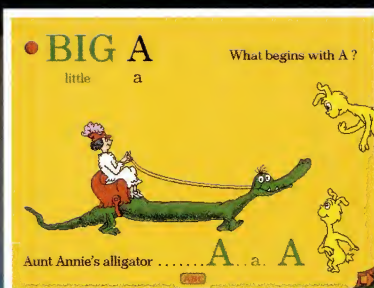


▲ *Plenty of tools to help you on your way to DTP button heaven*

Dr Seuss's ABC

Publisher: Broderbund
Tel: (01753) 620909

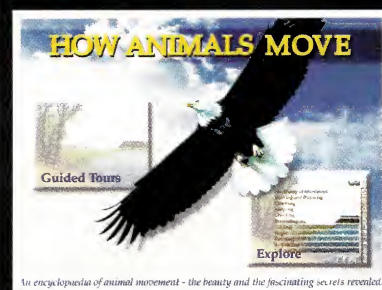
This classic American comic character helps to front teaching of the ABC's in this cut down demo version (just 'A'). Friendly cartoon characters talk you through each.



How Animals Move

Publisher: Maris
Tel: (0171) 488 1566

In this delightful guided tour of the animal kingdom, this sampler shows how such creatures as ants and birds move by using animations and video clips.



▲ *Soar like a hummingbird, or crawl like a snake. Both make an appearance here*

Video for Windows

Publisher: Microsoft
Tel: (01734) 270001

Supplied on the CD-ROM this month is a number of .AVI format files for video for Windows. If you haven't already got the latest version of Video for Windows (VFW), you can install it from the software menu

Formula 1 Manager

Publisher: Ascon
Tel: (0171) 372-7433

Manage a Formula One team through a season, good and bad both thick and thin. A wide choice of teams and equipment make for a great strategy game, and one that is not dependant on your hand eye coordination. Data for all the current Formula One teams are included, both big and small.

This is your best chance to play at the manager of the team, rather than simply racing around the track like most other race games. So what are you waiting for?

Digital Calendar



▲ Here's one background for you

Publisher: Digital Calendars
Tel: (01207) 270437

This calendar, although only in a version working till the end of 1995, offers a choice of four backgrounds. More are available and custom versions can be produced. There is space for hourly appointments as well as notes on every day with three months calendar being shown on the main screen for easy access to future, or past information.

The Tortoise and the Hare

Publisher: Broderbund
Tel: (01753) 620909

▼ A quiet day in the village



The Tortoise and the Hare has always been an endearing fable, and now it gets the Multi-media treatment from masters of the art of edutainment, Broderbund. With the text and voice-over also in three languages (English, French and German), this type of product also has a future in part as a potential language resource.

Redshift 2

Publisher: Maris
Tel: (0171) 488 1566

This is a visually stunning rolling demonstration of the all new version of *Redshift*. With new movie clips (including a ride Shoemaker-Levy into the Jupiter atmosphere) this CD-ROM promises to be a new standard of astronomy information on your desk.

Requires: Windows 3.1 or Win'95, 8Mb of RAM

▼ Send your mind out into the universe, without leaving your chair.



▲ Magic history and the extrovert Jay Alexander mix in this Magic sampler

Learn the art of magic

Publisher: Broderbund
Tel: (01753) 620909

Wacky American Jay Alexander presents this demo of the art of magic, and shows you the three card trick. He would show you how it's done, but not till you buy the package! He does however show and teach you the talking card trick - just don't let your friends find out the secrets before you can amaze them.

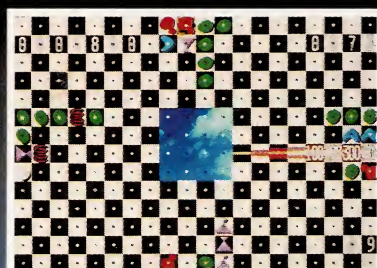
Jay also says a little on the greatest magician and escapologist of all time - Harry Houdini.

Zoop

Publisher: Viacom
Tel: 0181 563 4013

From the media giant Viacom, (owner of BlockBuster Video and Paramount) and in their own words 'Europe's Largest Killer of Time' comes this utterly bizarre and highly addictive

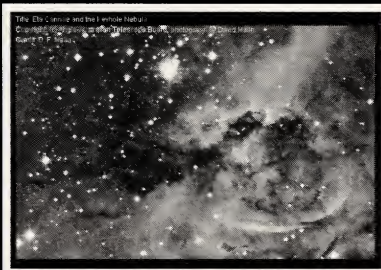
▼ Zoop, the latest form of shape based entertainment. Keep the funny blobs from advancing on your nice cloudy square



Redshift

Publisher: Maris
Tel: (0171) 488 1566

This superb graphically based database will let you explore the moons of Jupiter from any angle, and at any time, past present or future. Zoom in, or play the clock forward to see how the moons move in relation to the gas giant planet. Zoom out and see how it moves around the sun every 11.9 Earth years.



▲ JASA - Just Another Spacial Anomaly



▲ There are some believe that life began out there on the moons of Jupiter. Nah.

game. Most of the office have racked their brains to try to describe it, and the best we've come up with is like some bizzare solitaire with guns. If you can think of any better - e-mail us!

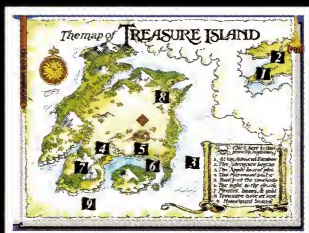
▼ Less a game, more an addictive substance, Zoop will have you crying into your tea as you struggle to advance through the levels.



Treasure Island

Publisher: Europress
Tel: 01625-878888

This classic tale of pirates and gold gets the CD-ROM multi-media experience. In this sampler you can explore a portion of the island, to read the first portion of the story. The delightful cartoon style animations will engross younger children.



◀ **Arrrh, Jim, lad.**
There be gold
buried on the
island.

Quicktime for Windows

Publisher: Apple Computers

Also on the CD-ROM are Quicktime Movies. In the 1st Degree has the very latest drivers, and, like Video for Windows you can also install it from the software menu.



The most accurate flight dynamics ever seen in a flight simulator.

SU27 Flanker

Publisher: Mindscape
Tel: (01444) 246333

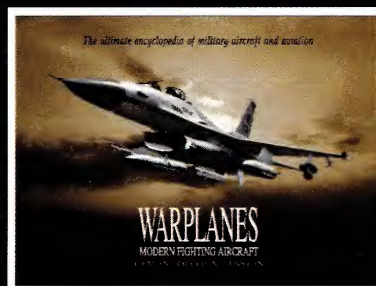
Everything about the Russian SU27 fighter says fast. Derivatives have set 27 world records for height and speed, and even more impressive is the deceleration. Named the Pugachev's Cobra it can slow from 450km/h to 250km/h in just 1.5 seconds, to stand on it's own tail, then return to normal flight. This rolling demonstration will take you through some of the manouvers of a pair of fighters on a mission, and showing off the impressive graphics.

Requires: Windows '95, min 8Mb of RAM

Warplane

Publisher: Maris Multimedia Direct
Tel: (01932) 854769

This interactive sampler of the multimedia database uses video and textual information to display information on several warplanes from the Gulf War arena. The point and click interface lets you navigate through the information presented. With animations of a two-aircraft bombing run and of a turbo-jet engine, as well as numerous high quality pictures of some of the various aircraft from the action, from fighter/bombers to the AWACS 'eye-in-the-sky'.



▲ **Walk softly and carry a big bomb**

If your disc *doesn't work...*

Before contacting us for technical support, make sure you have covered all possibilities for why your disc isn't working. For example:

- Has your machine got enough conventional and/or extended memory to run the demo?
 - Is your SoundCard compatible with the demo, and has the program been set up to use your cards' address, IRQ and DMA settings?
 - Have you read all the help information available with the demo - both on the CD and in the Disc Pages of the magazine?
 - If a game requires EMS memory, have you correctly set your EMM386 driver in the CONFIG.SYS system file to be able to use it?
 - If a program is DOS based, have you tried quitting out of Windows and running it directly from DOS? Some games will simply refuse to work under Windows, so it's worth considering.
- If you've tried everything here, and

still can't think why a program isn't running - give us a call on 01202-299900. Ask for the CD-ROM User Disc Editor. Our staff will do their very best to get your disc running as quickly as possible.

Alternatively, you can FAX us on 01202-299955.

The more information you can give us, the better. Try and include a printout of your CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files, machine specifications, and a detailed description of the problem.

This will help us to ascertain the cause of the problem, and we'll be able to reply to you quicker.

In the unlikely event that you need to send your disc back to us for replacement, please enclose your disc with a covering note and a return address to:

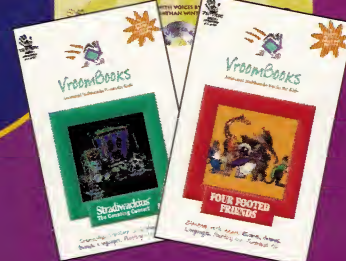
Paragon Publishing
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BOURNEMOUTH
Dorset
BH1 2JS

A replacement disc will, under normal circumstances be sent out, within 7 days.

Complaints:

If you have a serious complaint about the level of service you have received from any of our technical staff, please address any correspondence to: Steve Frisby, CD-ROM Production at the above address.

We are continually updating and improving our technical and customer service procedures, but we can't do it without knowing your views.



And when the zookeeper wasn't looking,
Marvin slipped out. **And** then I saw him on a train. **And**
in a restaurant. **And** at the museum. **And** that was
just the beginning of *The Escape of Marvin the Ape*.
And there were all those funny voices. **And** in
between reading, I played lots of games. **And...and**
painted lots of pictures. **And** I even printed
some of them out to colour on my own. **And** then I clicked on
those friendly worms, Wendy, Pablo **and** Albert, who always
have lots of fun learning-stuff to say.

And then I listened to it all
again in French. **And** in
Spanish. **And** in German. **And** then I saw Marvin at the
toy shop. **And...and** at the seaside. **And**
then my sister said she wanted to play. **And**
that's when I told her to make like a
banana...**and** split.

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As the new year rolls in, new products are coming from everyone. Here's a bumper crop of news...

news *net*

EC^{to} force CD-ROM Drive price rise

Those lovely folk in Brussels are about to squeeze the PC users' pockets once again with a new tariff to be imposed on the sale of CD-ROM Drives. Currently they are classed as computer equipment and receive a 3.9% tariff but under their new classification of consumer electrical equipment, because they can play audio CDs, they will be subject to a 13.9% tariff.

This extra cost is likely to be transferred directly to the consumer but some manufacturers may decide to bring their production to Europe, possibly creating new jobs. Philips are the only major company that manufacture their CD-ROM Drives in Europe so they may gain a competitive advantage until their rivals make a decision to move west or cut prices.

In the interim the consumer must once again shoulder the burden of some bizarre European legislation. No Christmas cards for them this year!

▼ *The humble CD-ROM drive seems set to rise in price thanks to red tape and politics*



Games for '95 Show on the *Internet*

Microsoft's World Wide Web site is playing host to an on-line exhibition of the future of PC gaming. Companies like LucasArts, id, Activision and Mindscape will be showing off their Windows '95 games to the world in a special section of Microsoft's site, <http://www.microsoft.com/>

With Windows '95 almost certain to become the games platform of the future, Microsoft is looking to get as many companies on the band wagon as soon as possible. The expo should encourage remaining companies to get in gear and perhaps attract new teams to the PC with the powerful Windows '95 Software Development Kit.



the *Rolling Stones* Lounge on CD-ROM

The Voodoo Lounge CD-ROM is the first multimedia disc from the ever-rocking Rolling Stones. Claiming to have a practically non-existent interface is just one of the less than usual features. What is known is that the CD contains live concert footage, including clips shot from a camera mounted on Ronnie's glasses and unique mixes from the album. Other features include footage of backstage antics, an interactive screen saver creator with psychedelic images, the band and scantily clad women plus a jam session with Ronnie and Keith.

The CD is presented from a 3D plantation set in Louisiana with a mansion which you can explore to find the various areas. It was developed by the Rolling Stones with a Los Angeles multimedia company and costs £29.99. Released on the Virgin label, it looks like a must for all Stones fans.

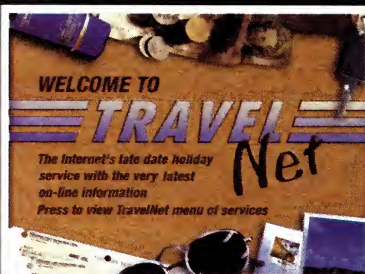
Tel 0171 3682255

CD-ROM meets the Internet

CD-Net is a new product developed in the UK by Module Communications and pow Communications that allows World Wide Web pages to pull data off CD-ROM. The CD-ROM stores both communications software and graphical and audio information which the World Wide Web page requests when needed. Anyone who has used the Internet with a modem will instantly spot the benefit of minimised downloading time.

Of course the CD-ROM will become out of date rapidly and its applications are limited by the time value of the data. On-line catalogues and travel brochures are two possible example of the way it could be used. Steve Hinchliffe of Module Communications describes CD-Net as "the next generation of World Wide Web interface."

Tel - 0171 379 7919



PC Joysticks on the march

Quite a few new controllers are sprinting on to the market for Christmas, among them Logitech is offering its Wingman Light and Thunderpad. Both retailing at £24 the devices are aimed at the entry level market. The Thunderpad uses digital to analogue technology to eliminate problems with games that expect analogue controls. Both are ergonomically designed and are designed to survive the most intense use.

Tel - 01344 894300



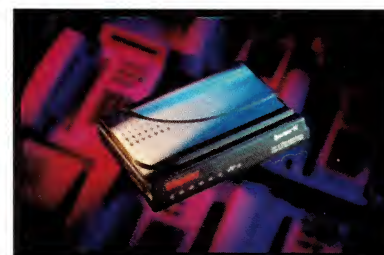
Talk loud on-line with US Robotics

The successful Sportster range of modems has a new relative with the launch of the Sportster Vi. Restyled and with voice modem facilities, the Sportster Vi retails features V.32 bis 14.4kbps communications and fax facilities for the entry level price of £99.

Designed as a message centre, users get telephone answering, voice mail and fax on demand functions while benefiting from Internet access through a deal with PIPEX. The voice mails are stored on the hard disk and can be accessed in the same manner as ordinary data. The fax on demand feature means people can ring up and choose which fax they wish to receive, useful for fax helpdesk or fax information systems.

Tel - 01734 228200

▶ After many years looking like a prototype Stylophone, Sportster modems now look, well sporty



Designers calling planet Earth

▶ For sale, one continent. In need of much repair. Picture by Terra Forma for all your global needs

Andromeda Interactive's *Terra Forma* is a set of CD-ROMs containing 83 high resolution pictures of the Earth which can be incorporated by designers into their work. The three disc set's introductory price of £817 puts the product firmly in the design company market, however the images are royalty free thereafter and any element of an image can be edited in layers and can be viewed by landmass or region. Physical features such as land masses or cities can be included along with borders. So if you're in the need of detailed pictures of everyone's favourite planet *Terra Forma* could be for you. The price of the set is due to rise, so hurry!

Tel - 01235 529595



Go **Boom** with **Sony**

Sony is launching high powered multimedia speakers aimed at the user in search of quality sound. The SRS-PC91 speakers are rated at 10W output per channel and have a frequency range of 60Hz to 30kHz. The objective is for high power and clarity without distortion. The low distortion speakers are magnetically shielded and come, two inputs with selector switch and headphone socket. A bass boosting reflex system will keep powerful bass levels at low volume. All the controls are tucked away on the side of one of the speakers.

Sony follows the Electronic Industries Association of Japan guidelines for rating speakers and claim that some other companies ignore distortion when rating their equipment. The speakers retail for £147 and are available from Byte superstores.

Tel 0181 760 0500



Government opened up on **CD-ROM**

The turbulent period of British Government in 1964 during the change over from the Douglas-Home administration to the Wilson government is chronicled with three sets of CD-ROMs. Each is packed full with digital copies of documents from government departments. Aimed primarily at the academic research market, these reference titles open up part of the huge archive of material that is stored at the Public Records Office.

The material is now available for public consumption under the 30 year rule and includes information on NATO, The Western European Union. The papers come from such sources as the Prime Ministers Office, Foreign Office, Cabinet Committees and include diplomatic correspondence.

Approximately 120,000 documents are in the set which retails for £350 per CD. A library and index disc costs £235. The complete set of discs can be bought for £1058.

Tel 0171 873 9090

Sex and **Death** sound fine

The Institute of Contemporary Arts in London played host to the launch of another in the slowly growing number of music CDs with multimedia capabilities. Introduced by Anthony H. Wilson, remembered as the host of Channel 4's Remote Control, The Durutti Column's new album *Sex and Death* includes a screen saver with 28 images based on the cover, sleeve notes for all the tracks and some deep thoughts from the band.

The instruments used to create the music also make an appearance with detailed photos and spoken descriptions of the instrument and its use in the track. The music itself consists of guitar-based mellow tunes, music for dreaming to for some, elevator music to others. The package comes wrapped in a black

emery board cover. Explanations on a postcard please.

▼ **The album sleeve rediscovered on CD-ROM. Sex and Death provide notes, humour and plain weirdness, all for the price of a music CD**



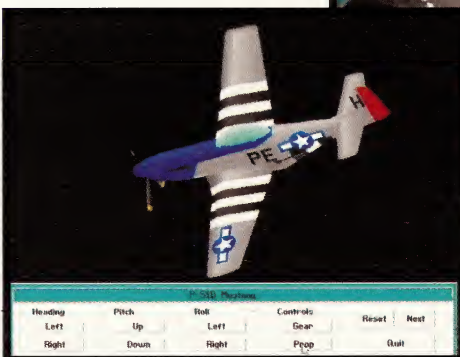
Spend **Christmas** killing your friends

Just missing review this month is Philips Media's latest release *Fighter Duél*, an air combat game with the emphasis firmly on multi-player dog fighting. The game is set over a vast sea dotted with small islands and an aircraft carrier, but all the action is in the air as you fight for supremacy and your life.

The 13 World War Two aircraft, including the Spitfire and Mustang, all have highly realistic cockpits and are texture mapped for external viewing. True to life aerodynamics make the game as realistic as possible and the SVGA give it a superb look. In high resolution mode the game is very playable on a 486DX2-66 but wonderfully smooth on a Pentium. Serial, modem and network play lets you take on your friends, while the computer controlled planes have their own artificial intelligence. *Fighter Duél* could be the two player gaming experience of the year. Watch out for a full review of *Fighter Duél* next month

Tel 0171 9113094

► **There are two kinds of aircraft, fighters and targets. Which one are you? Test your skill with *Fighter Duél***



◀ **The P-51 Mustang, one of the fastest and most manoeuvrable fighters of the war, accurately reproduced in SVGA and quite simply wonderful to fly**

News Nibbles

Team 17 is expanding with their new division, The Big Room. Concentrating on reference and edutainment. Further releases will cover aspects of pop culture. Tel 01924 267776

Microsoft is claiming world-wide sales figures of seven million units for its Windows 95 operating system in the two months since its launch. The figure includes OEM, upgrades and new sales. According to independent research, 91% of customers are reporting satisfaction with the system. Tel 01734 270 001

Apricot computers will soon be flying off of Dixons' shelves in a deal between the Mitsubishi division and the high street chain. A million pound campaign will support the launch that is expected to put pressure on IBM Aptiva sales. For £1,399, you can pick up a multimedia Pentium with large software bundle.

Libraries are beginning to lend CD-ROMs with the help of Ramesis and The Daily Telegraph. Initially available in 30 major libraries, over 300 titles will be available including reference, educational software, multimedia and some game titles. Find out more through the Ramesis Information Hotline on 01274 737376

Sega's Virtua Fighter Remix and Panzer Division will be available for the PC bundled with the Diamond Edge card, which used NVIDIA technology (CDRU 16). Mega Drive titles like Ecco the Dolphin and Comix Zone are also due soon, which will run on a standard MPC. Retail prices are between £29.95 and £49.95

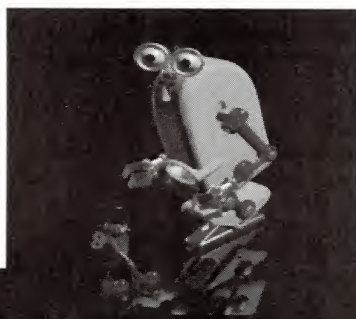
Get ready to with **freeze** **Domark**

Absolute Zero is set on the Frozen wastes of Jupiter's moon, Europa. From within its core has come a terrifying alien presence which is terrorising a peaceful mining colony. Devoid of weaponry, the mining colony must make use of their machinery to fight off the alien intruder.

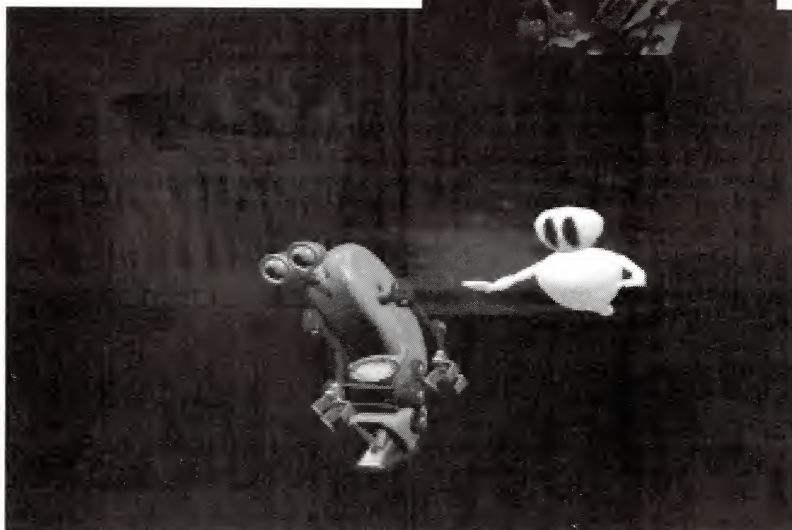
The game itself is a texture mapped shoot 'em up featuring ground level and aerial action. with seven characters, each with their vehicle and over fifteen types of

improvised weaponry. The game features FMV, voices and loads of missions plus a few twists. Available on CD-ROM, *Absolute Zero* is expected to have a 15+ ELSPA rating.

Tel 0181 780 2222



► **Quake in fear as the strange rendered creatures come to life and pester you for money on the street**



▲ **A distant relative of Casper goes on the rampage. More cracked than the haunted house, this guy will take some stopping**

Core brings death from the skies

Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2 from Core Design is looking like throwing the PC sim-everything tag out the window. This full-on arcade helicopter game is the sequel to a Sega Mega-CD game of all things. *Firestorm* puts you in charge of a AH-73M Thunderhawk attack helicopter in the year 1999.

NATO needs your combat skills to crush fighting and revolution in 9 global hot spots, ranging from Russia to Panama and the South China Seas. The combat is of the low altitude, ground hogging, variety as you blaze away at troops, trucks, tanks, boats and other choppers with your missiles and guns.

Tel - 01332 297792



◀ **The original Thunderhawk on the PC was yet another sim, not this time, matey**

Klik & Create your way to better presentations!

Europress Software is releasing Klik & Create, a natural progression from its earlier success of Klik & Play. The new package is a full multimedia authoring tool as well as providing the user with the ability to make games, screen savers and professional presentations.

Available now, *Klik & Create* is priced at £49.99.

Tel 01625 859333

news special

News
Special

Microsoft '96 releases tie-ins with Windows 95 and MSN



▲ **Encarta 96 is the door to masses of information. Sports stars rub shoulders with eminent physicists, political leaders with single cell organisms. The whole world is at your fingertips**

Microsoft's attempts to promote Windows 95 and The Microsoft Network (MSN) through their Home range of software were on display at a London press conference recently. *Encarta 96*, *Cinemania 96* and *Music Central 96* all can be used in conjunction with the MSN to keep the products up to date on a monthly basis. *Cinemania 96* and the new *Music Central* are both Windows 95 only products and their wide appeal might make a lot of home users decide to convert.

Encarta 96, subtitled the World English Edition, has had its nine million words regionalised and over 3,800 new articles were included while 4,000 existing ones were edited to give a British perspective. Among the new articles are features on topics as diverse as Tony Blair, The Brecon Beacons, John Le Carre and Punk. The CD now contains 8,000 photos, over 3,300 sound clips, over 80 animations and 31 video clips. *Encarta 96* will initially retail for £49.99 as an introductory offer before rising to £79.99.

Cinemania 96 updates the previous edition with new reviews and a video

rental suggestion utility that helps you decide what film you might like to watch. *Cinemania* is still a universal product, heavily slanted towards the American market. There are now 20,000 movie reviews provided by Ebert, Maltin and Kael, 2,500 star photos, 1200 stills and over 20 video clips.

The most striking of the new additions is *The Adventures Of Pricilla*, Queen Of The Desert, plus a video clip of the actors' performance of *I Will Survive*. Linking to the MSN allows downloading of new reviews and access to the *Cinemania Connection* which plays host to the latest news and gossip. *Cinemania 96* retails for £29.99.

Music Central 96 is a new product to the Microsoft Home stable and does for modern music what *Cinemania* does to the movies. It has details of over 60,000 albums, 8,000 artist biographies and 2100 photo's, over 5,000 reviews produced in association with Q Magazine, 50

▼ **Track down your favourites and uncover rarities on your musical heroes with Music Central 96**



▲ **Encarta has undergone many changes since its last release. Rejoice in knowing that Britain and its culture get a major boost in coverage**

music clips and 30 minutes of rare performance footage, taken mostly from British TV shows like *The Old Grey Whistle Test*. *Music Central 96* retails for £39.99

The updates to all these packages can be downloaded simply by selecting a special icon on the menu - of course you'll have to possess an MSN account to get this information. A years worth of updates should take up around 6-7Mb of hard disk space and each update automatically links itself to the relevant section of the product. The updates are also available from Microsoft's World Wide Web page on the Internet.

▼ **Travel through history with the timeline feature in Encarta 96. Just one of the many ways of browsing through the information stored on this data packed CD-ROM**



▲ **The new localised version of Encarta goes a long way to making you feel at home**

User

Feedback

Here's your chance to tell us what you think.
Are we doing a good job or have you got a complaint?
Write to us at the address below or E-mail us at
cdromuser@paragon.co.uk

Write to:

User Feedback, CD-ROM User

Paragon Publishing

Back to back!

£50

Your feature last month about backing up your data was a bit pointless in my opinion. I have a 486DX2-66 with a 420Mb hard disk and all of my software is on disk or CD-ROM, so I can re-install it all at the drop of a hat. I understand that if you have pirate software on your system, you may not have the original disks to replace the files if they're lost, but that doesn't apply to me. My PC is over a year old now, and in that time I have never had a crash apart from running games in DOS, so why bother. I have saved over £100 by not buying a tape streamer.

Alistair Evans
Reading, Berks

You are a perfect candidate for losing all of your software! You have the 'It can't happen to me' attitude that results in car crashes, stolen property and, more importantly, lost files.

What about your letters and personal files that don't come with the software packages? Do you think they're safe?

I have used a PC for several years and have found out the hard way that they crash and lose data.

One time, I was defragmenting my hard drive when a nice man from the Gas Board decided to cut through the main electricity supply for the area! This resulted in a dead disk drive and a hefty insurance claim for said Gas Board.

The bottom line is, if my data wasn't backed up, I'd have lost about two years' work.

Don't be a fool. Even if you buy a pack of floppy disks and just back up the data, do it now, before your own nemesis catches up with you. Remember to save configuration files for the software, too. Re-installing may be possible, but it takes

ages to restore everything to its former glory.

Normally, we'd send a cheque for £50 to you, but yours is in the form of a voucher to spend on a tape drive!

Anoraknophobia

I am writing to express my concern that Windows 95 is removing some of the basic skills from the PC owner. There is no longer a need to know the intricacies of DOS or how to configure the CONFIG.SYS or AUTOEXEC.BAT files, so these abilities will be lost forever. Half the fun of getting a program to run is playing around with these files to increase the available

£10

memory. If people don't know how to do this, there will be an endless stream of extra calls to the software companies for help.

Jeremy Wilson
Utoxeter, Staffs

Most people are not like you, Jeremy (as you've probably noticed). They want to run software, not spend their entire waking lives attempting to configure their system.

Windows 95 may have a few hiccups, but it is bringing the PC to the non-technical, which can only be a good thing. Software shouldn't need configuring to run any more. More people with PCs means more software being developed,

Where's it from?

Somewhere in this issue is this screenshot. Find it and E-mail or write to us with the name of the program and the publisher to win a free CD-ROM of your choice. Send your answer on a postcard to:



Got It! (18)
CD-ROM User,
Paragon
House,
St Peter's
Road,
Bournemouth
BH1 2JS

assuring the life of your machine. If you don't see the benefit of that, then you need to get along to Millets and buy a new Anorak and some more tape for the edge of your glasses. Basically Jeremy, get a life!

Internet Explosion

£25

The Internet has increased in popularity recently, so it surprises me to see that you have dropped your Net page. I would have thought that a magazine that deals with multimedia would be increasing its coverage of this revolution, not reducing it. Is there a reason or will the pages be coming back?

Stephen Henderson
Aberdeen, Scotland

There are now several magazines that deal specifically with the Net on the shelves including Internet Today and NetUser from Paragon. Whilst the Net can certainly be classed as multimedia, there's so much going on in our area of the market, there's no need to fill our pages with information that may only have a peripheral interest. Having said that, we will feature information on the Net occasionally, focussing on how it inter-relates with the CD-ROM and multimedia markets.

▼ For more information on the Net, read NetUser



Jumping the Bandwagon 2

Last month, you advised Richard Evans from Cannock to buy a fast Pentium PC with 16-bit sound card and quad speed CD-ROM drive. I am also considering

buying a new machine as I currently have a 386DX20 with a single speed CD drive, but I use my machine for graphics, ray-tracing and playing games. I would like to go for a Pentium-Pro and, perhaps a 6x drive. I think your advice was wrong and my new machine will out-last any Pentium that is on the market.

Neil Davis
Swansea, Mid Glamorgan

Obviously any advice given through these pages are specific to the questions raised, but I still stand by my answer, Neil. If you ask me the same question inb three months time, the answer may well be different. Buying a Pentium-Pro is for the foolhardy or extremely wealthy at the moment as the extra speed offered is not worth the enormous price tag that will inevitably be attached to the new processor. Also, there hasn't been enough time to iron out any potential bugs or problems revealed by sustained use in an office environment. If you have money to burn, then by all means, buy the new processor, but it will be several years before it is compulsory to own a Pro chip to run the latest software.

Sound Advice

I was most impressed with the two QSound demos on your cover CDs recently. It raises the question of how do I program my sound files to get this effect and what is the future of this innovation?

Adrian Walsh
London, E16

QSound has been around for some time now and can be found on albums by Sting, Madonna, Pink Floyd and Roger Waters, but it is a recent innovation in the computer gaming world. The reason for this rise in popularity is the fact that most PC speaker systems are set up on either side of the monitor - the ideal setup for optimum performance of the QSound system. The effect is achieved without adding a centre rear speakers, so it has an advantage over the better, but more involved Dolby Surround code, although it is described as 220 degree sound and no pretences are made as to it being a complete surround experience. As for availability, look for products with the QSound logo on them and watch for the reviews. Any products with this feature will be highlighted.

Need for Action

Firstly, I must confess that this month was the first time I've bought your mag and I'm very impressed although it could probably do with being a little thicker (in number of pages rather than intelligence-wise!). I'm having problems with running the demo version of *Need for Speed* on the recent issue, I've had my computer for almost a year so I've become pretty competent at changing start-up files but this ones got me stumped!

I've got a Dan 486 DX2-66, 8Mb RAM, 256k Cache, 1Mb Cirrus Logic VL Bus Graphics card, a dual speed CD-ROM drive (Panasonic) and SoundBlaster 16 card. I've had no problems with my computer and I've checked everything out so it must be either the CONFIG.SYS or AUTOEXEC.BAT files that are wrong.

I load the game up by typing 'runsbl', this gives me two intro screens and then goes to the Control Center (main menu), the demo of the Viper works perfectly with decent sound and picture quality. When I click on 'Drive' it puts up a loading screen with a car and a 'loading' message at the bottom of the screen. The CD-ROM drive spins for a few seconds and then goes to a blank screen, the CD-ROM drive stops and the energy saving device on my monitor clicks on after a few seconds. The program then exits to DOS and displays the following message :

```
reservemem - OUT OF MEMORY
requested: 262144
available: 138208
```

I've played around with my CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files but cannot increase my memory. I usually operate a multiple configuration using QEMM memory manager but the system tends to crash when it tries to load *Need for Speed*. If it doesn't crash then it displays the message :

```
reservemem - OUT OF MEMORY
requested: 262144
available: 1,700,000
```

This seems a bit strange :) I usually have video shadow enabled in my CMOS but have tried it with it enabled and disabled without success. I've changed CONFIG.SYS to include Files=50 and Buffers=30, but this has no effect, this surely just increases the environment size? I have included my CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files in this E-mail. They are not my normal ones but I have cut

them down to free as much memory as possible (about 570k after start-up). I have been careful to include all the suggestions in your magazine. My bios software is Award. I apologise for the length of this post but I'm totally stuck and can't think of any solution. I've never come across this message before so I would be extremely grateful if you could help me. All the other programs on the CD work as does everything else on hard-drive so its not a problem with my hardware or CD driver as far as I can tell.

Thanks again in advance and I hope to hear from you soon,
Andy Blossie
Via E-Mail

The problem of memory is one we encounter often here at CD-ROM User, so this answer will probably help a lot of people. As with any problem, it's always better to have as much information as possible, rather than not enough.

The suggestions to run *Need for Speed* are to start very basic and work your way up. Place the word REM in front of all the lines of sound support in your CONFIG.SYS file, and anything else that takes up memory not absolutely essential. Start the program with NOSOUND.BAT, and go into the options to run in the lowest screen settings.

After you have the program working, you can improve one aspect at a time until you start getting memory errors. This applies to any program that gives problems.

Write Now!

Send your letters to User Feedback, CD-ROM User, Paragon Publishing Ltd, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS, or E-mail cdromuser@paragon.co.uk.

All letters are deemed for publication unless otherwise stated. We reserve the right to edit letters. CD-ROM User cannot print every letter and do not guarantee to do so. We regret that it is impossible to offer personal replies.

The best letter each month will win £50 and other prizes of £25 and £10 will be awarded at the Editor's discretion.

Christmas

John Hetherington looks at some festive CD gift ideas for the whole family.

wishes

If there's one bit of kit that can truly be said to have brought multimedia to the whole family, it must be the CD ROM drive itself. It wasn't the Pentium, despite what Intel says. And it wasn't Windows 95, despite what Microsoft says. Software prices have plummeted to realistic levels and the floodgates have opened up. There are now multimedia titles for just about everything - and if you're looking for an unusual present for the CD-ROM owner with everything, we've made it a little easier for you. There really is something for all the family!

For him

If the man in your life sometimes shows more concern for his car than he does for you, take comfort in the fact that you're probably not alone. *Autoworks* is an invaluable reference work that might save a few pounds on servicing costs and which will let him take his car to bits without getting oil all over the drive and incurring a huge repair bill. *Formula One* is a video-packed look at motor racing through the twentieth century, with full details of all the cars and drivers in the 1994 season. There are also two games, *Crazy Cars 3* and *Fire and Forget 2*. If he's shown signs of road rage of late, he'll love these two titles.

If he's showing too much passion in the opposite direction, there's *Penthouse Select-a-Pet*. This is

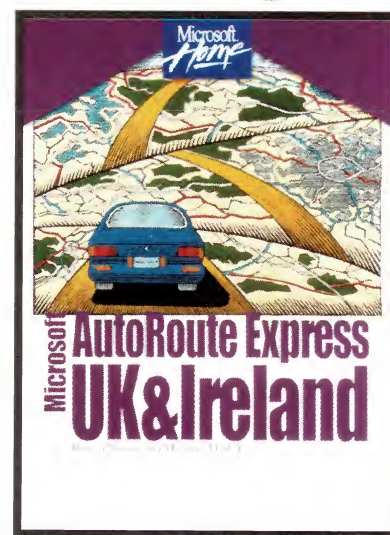
◀ **The Microsoft Wine Guide will get the old taste buds going.**

definitely a naughty title but it has a well-designed interface and 500 high resolution pictures of beautiful girls in all kinds of poses, from tame and 'tasteful' to hot, spicy and decidedly not tasteful. The idea is to make up your own slideshow of your favourites.

Getting back to cold metal again, *Autoroute Express* is a good choice for those whose map-reading skills aren't all they should be. With this long-standing and popular title, recently acquired by Microsoft, you can plan journeys throughout the UK and Ireland and let the computer do all the work. You can even print out a map and get a list of locations and roads you will pass through or along, so there'll be no more excuses for getting lost.

If he's partial to a drop of grape juice try the *Microsoft Wine Guide*. Presented by Oz Clark, it is distinctly British in flavour (the CD not the wine) and there are dozens of video sequences to work through. You can ask the program to select a wine to match a meal you're planning or just get a run-down on the wines in your cellar. If he doesn't know his Chablis from his Champagne or Chardonnay, this could be a good move.

We all know how important exercise is but there isn't a lot you

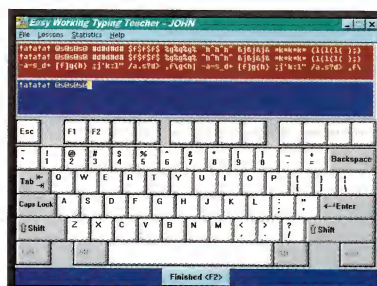


▶ **Autoroute Express - send him off to John O'Groats for the day?**

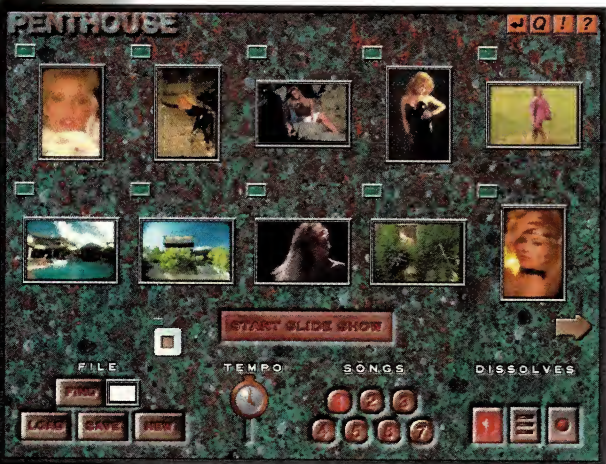
can do when you're sitting at a keyboard. One thing you can do is exercise your fingers with a typing tutor like Softkey's *Typing Teacher*. This has lots of hidden benefits.

It doesn't drive you spare watching him tapping away with his right forefinger, and his typing speed will increase so there are no more excuses for a whole evening spent thrashing the keyboard.

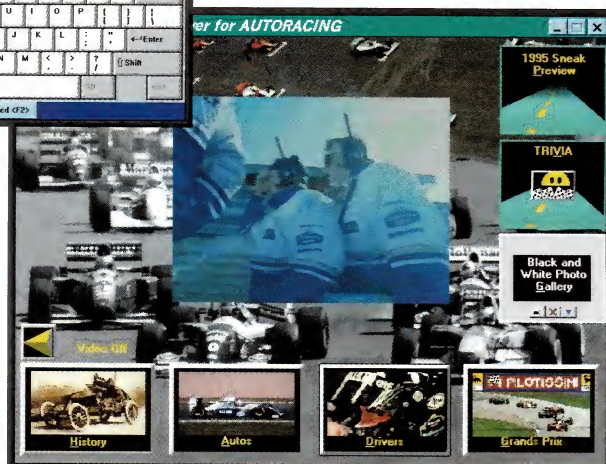
▼ **Autoworks is one answer to road rage (other than buying him a bicycle)**



▶ **Get him up to speed and perhaps he won't spend so long on the keyboard**



◀ **Penthouse Select-a-Pet - a bit naughty...**



For her

There are plenty of multimedia titles out there that will appeal to the fairer sex this Christmas. If she's looking out at an empty, dead garden, why not try one of the garden design programs that are available? These let you draw your garden, specify its aspect (which bit gets the shade and when) and add not only trees, shrubs and flower beds but other ornaments like borders, patios, pools and so on. You can then look at your garden design and use the database of plants to help you plan which ones will do well in each location.

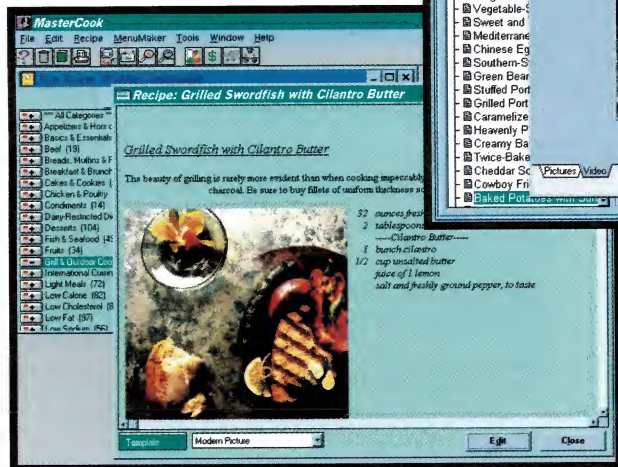
Europress Software's *BBC Garden Designer 2.0* is a DOS based program with a good plant database and excellent visual tools and is best for garden planning. FastTrack's *3D Landscape Designer* has a slightly different emphasis, allowing you to plan the layout of your house, garage, drive, walls, fences as well as your garden. Both will provide a lot more fun than a potted plant or a packet of seeds...

If she's not the sort that thinks that she's chained to the kitchen sink, there are several cookbook CDs that might appeal. Softkey's *Healthy Indulgences* is based on a US TV series but features over 500Mb of some of the highest quality digital video you're likely to see. All the dishes and techniques have a low fat emphasis and you can count the amount of fat and the number of calories in each one.

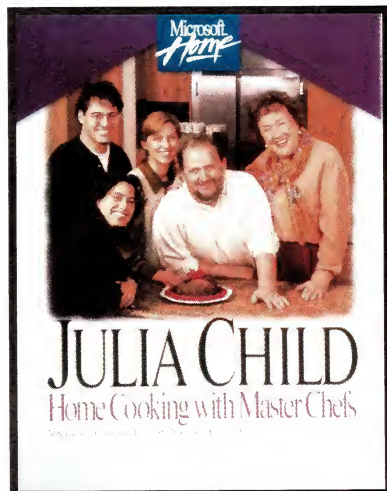
The *Silver Platter Cookbook* from Softkey is a masterful collection of recipes ranging from the easy to the sublime, from cheese on toast to Turkey in mustard and caper sauce. The huge database is kept on the CD ROM so searching can be a little slow but you search in several different ways, scale the amount of ingredients, and even type in and save your own. It's not too hot on multimedia but there's plenty of meat to it (pun intended).

Of course, it is no use planning a hundred and one exciting things to do

▼ **The Silver Platter cookbook offers a massive database of recipes**



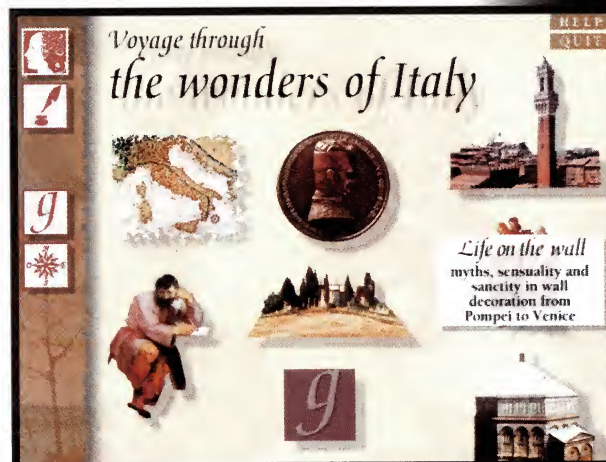
► **BBC Garden Designer 2.0 - move over Percy Thrower, the CD ROM is here**



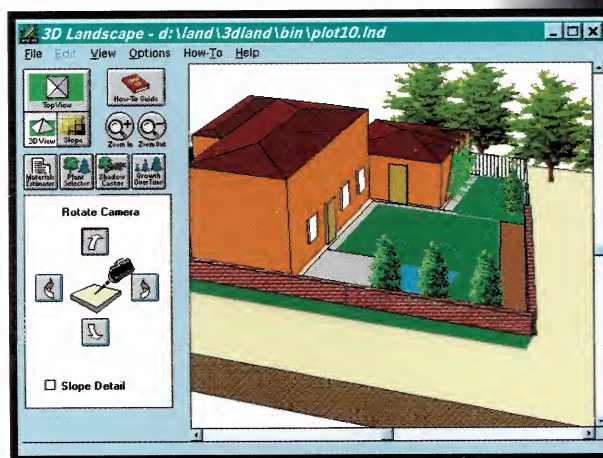
► **Microsoft's entry into the kitchen is Julia Child's Home Cooking title.**

with your egg whisk if your kitchen isn't up to the task. With *3D Floorplan Plus*, you can plan out your kitchen (or even a complete house) in overhead view and then use the 3D modeller to view it from any angle you like. The colours are a bit on the gruesome side but at least you can tell her you're spending night after night planning her dream kitchen, can't you?

Why not whisk her away from it all this Christmas with a romantic trip to Italy? You can choose from one of four destinations - Rome, Venice, Siena or Florence - and start looking at the art, history and architecture in just minutes. OK, it's not quite as much fun as being there but EMME has packed an awful lot into its *Voyage Through Italy* CD ROM title. There's not much in the way of video (only four short clips) but there are hundreds of digitised images of places, buildings, interiors, and famous paintings. Beats a day trip to Calais, I suppose.



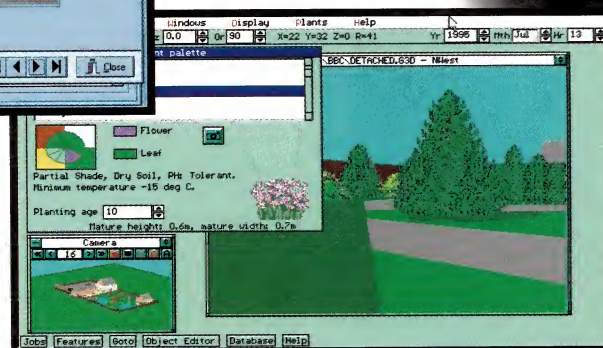
► **EMME's Voyage to Italy - not much video but plenty of good stills**



► **Healthy Indulgences - low fat cooking**

If all else fails and you get flour in your keyboard, you could always forget the computer and take her to a restaurant, couldn't you? On second thoughts...

◀ **Healthy food that's tasty too. Sounds too good to be true! Let me at that Old-Fashioned Meat Loaf**



For youngsters

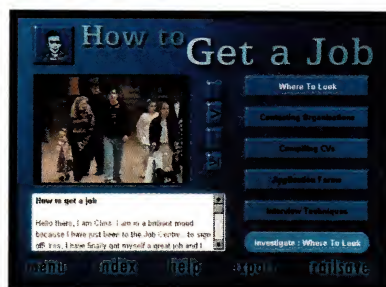
The younger generations have benefited enormously from CD ROM technology and you're pretty well spoilt for choice, even if you leave games out of the equation. Let's start at the top and work our way down.

For the fledglings that are about to leave the nest, or the ones who soon will be, why not offer a helping hand? Yorkshire TV and Thomson Multimedia have combined their talents to produce a special careers based title. This offers plenty of advice on different careers, practical job-hunting advice such as CV creation and interview techniques, and a self-discovery section for job aptitude. Some of the exotic options are covered too, including working abroad, adventure training and voluntary work.

Less comprehensive but a lot cheaper and more practical is *Professional CV Writer for Windows*, a CD ROM package that asks you for input on your career and training to date and then produces a stylish CV that you can add to or customise for each job application. This bargain basement title might just tip the balance in someone's favour.

Apart from Microsoft *Encarta*, which is almost a prerequisite for any family serious about its multimedia, there are dozens of other titles that will help students and schoolchildren in their learning and their homework. One package I wouldn't be without is the *Oxford Reference Shelf* - not only

▼ Professional CV Writer for Windows - makes light work of a heavy chore



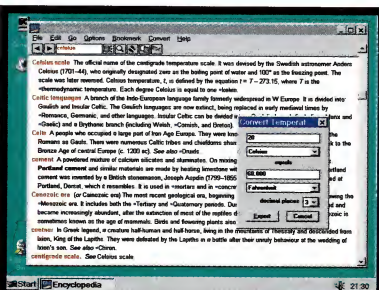
▲ YTM's Careers CD should help them get a job

does it include mini-dictionaries on various topics including computers, business and abbreviations, but it also features books of quotations, translation dictionaries for Spanish, French, German and Italian, a gazetteer and a small encyclopaedia.

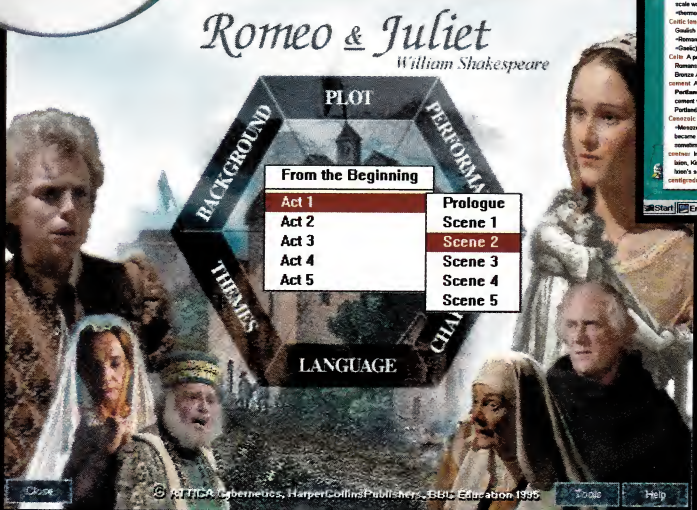
Above a particular age, you can't possibly offer them CD-ROM title with the word "learning" in it but there are plenty of ways around this problem. Shakespeare is part of the national curriculum and Attica Cybernetics has produced three innovative CD-ROMs covering three of his great works in amazing detail, from a complete soundtrack of the play with video clips and in depth analysis. Titles include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*. The latter could be very useful for the love-struck members of the household.

For the more environmentally conscious, Cosmi produce several conservation titles, including *Climatic Change*, *Dwindling Resources* and *Water* (which should go down especially well in West Yorkshire).

Sport isn't particularly well covered but one title which stands out is *Martial Arts Explorer*, an imaginative and extremely informative exercise in exploring all the popular martial arts form including Judo and Karate as well as the more unusual forms such as Taekwondo and Ninjutsu. Mountains of video clips let you compare and



◀ Romeo and Juliet - for the seriously love-struck. Follow the plot for a better understanding and higher grades



All wired up

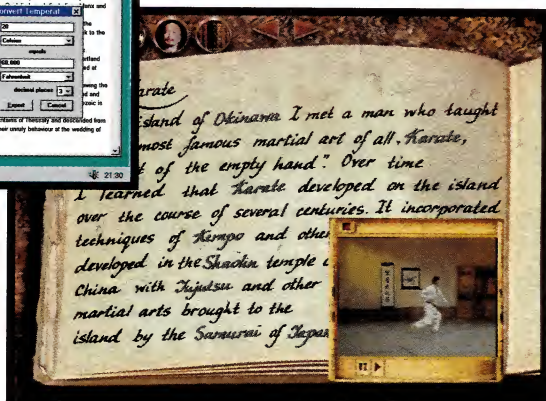
Many people don't realise it but audio CDs can be played in a computer CD ROM drive, provided you have a pair of speakers. The best way is to plug your CD ROM drive into your sound card using the appropriate cable (usually supplied with both items). With a simple utility (such as the one supplied with Windows 95) you can pop an audio CD in the drive and play music directly. Alternatively, if you don't have a sound card connected to your CD ROM drive, you can plug the speakers directly into the socket on the front panel of the CD ROM drive.



▲ Turn your CD ROM drive into a hifi with Windows 95

contrast martial arts, analyse moves and vulnerable points of the anatomy, and look at the history and philosophy behind the various forms. Even if you're not practising a martial art, this CD will provide hours of entertainment and study. The interface is pure class and the price won't floor you either.

◀ The Oxford Reference Shelf has all the answers



▲ Martial Arts Explorer is one of the best multimedia titles on offer this Christmas

For grandparents

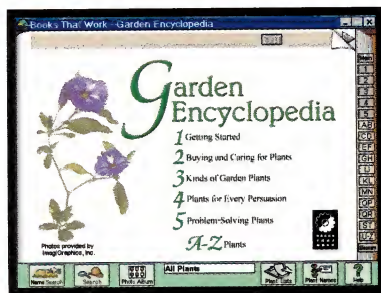
When you meet someone in their seventies and they start talking avidly about their PC, you realise how far the CD revolution has taken us. It's hard - if not impossible - to list titles which will only appeal to the older generation but a handful spring to mind, if you've got elderly relatives to buy for.

The *Gardening Encyclopaedia* from FastTrak is an ideal gardener's aid that lets you find plants of a given colour that bloom at a particular time of year. You can also search for plants that will thrive under difficult conditions - clay soils, north facing walls and so on - to ensure your garden is colourful and healthy all the year round. This CD holds data on over 1,000 species of plant, has a huge photo album with audio pronunciation of the name, and features full motion video on plant care and selection. Plant records can be personalised and custom lists saved and printed. An ideal gift for gardeners that will give them something to do until the sun comes out again!

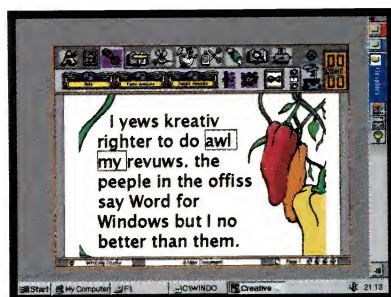
Pets are another favourite of older people and there are several options. Microsoft's *Dogs* CD ROM should appeal to dog lovers while *Kittens to Cats*, from FastTrak, should the feline supporters happy. It is an interactive guide to choosing a kitten, diet and nutrition, training, exercise and cat health problems and it includes a number of digitised video sequences and hundreds of stills. It even includes a video cassette in the same box - isn't that rather missing the point somewhere?

Grandparents can have fun with computers too. Just because they remember the war...

▼ The Gardening Encyclopaedia has details on over 1,000 plants



▼ Kittens to Cats - a feast for feline fanciers



▲ Creative Writer is an excellent first word processor

For tots

These days you've got to know what a keyboard is if you want to get on in life and the earlier you start the better. One new, cute title is Omnimedia's *The Greatest Toyshop on Earth*, a kind of multi-activity package with a front end that represents a toyshop. The sound and graphics are entertaining and should hold even the tiniest tot's attention for a while.

Crayola is a name most parents will have come across - many kids' crayons bear the name. Now the company is involved in multimedia and the result is *Crayola Amazing Art Adventure*, a superb polished package revolving around painting and drawing

▼ Crayola is already the name on most of the world's crayons - will it make it in multimedia?



▲ The Greatest Toyshop On Earth? I prefer Toy's 'rus myself...

but using sound and colour to maximum effect. There's also a sister title called *Crayola Art Studio* aimed at slightly older children which is just as much fun.

Microsoft are well into the fray at this end of the market too with dozens of titles, including *Creative Writer* that teaches youngsters to write using symbols and shapes. There's also the *Magic School Bus* series. One in particular is great fun and highly entertaining, that's *Exploring the Human Body*.

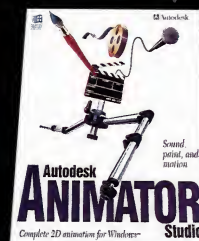


► Magic School Bus - Microsoft indoctrination from an early age but pretty good for all that

Where to get them...

3D Landscape	FastTrak	Kittens to cats	FastTrak
01923 246427	£49.95	01923 246427	£39.95
Crayola Art Adventure	Micrografx	Martial Arts Explorer	Softkey
01483 747526	£29.99	0181 789 2000	£24.99
Magic School Bus	Microsoft	Oxford Reference Shelf	OUP
01345 002000	£45	01865 267979	£79.99
Creative Writer	Microsoft	Power Pack Automotive	Softkey
01345 002000	£29.99	0181 789 2000	£24.99
Autoroute Express	Microsoft	Professional CV Writer	VCI Software
01345 002000	£59	01923 255558	£14.99
BBC Garden Designer 2.0	Europress	Romeo and Juliet	Attica
01625 859333	£29.99	01865 791346	£57.56
Careers	YITM	Penthouse Select a-Pet	EMME
0113 243 8283	£79.99	01923 240050	£34.99
Creative Writer	Microsoft	Silver Platter Cookbook	Softkey
01345 002000	£29.99	0181 789 2000	£46.99
Garden Encyclopaedia	FastTrak	Typing Teacher	Softkey
01923 246427	£39.95	0181 789 2000	£14.99
Greatest Toyshop on Earth	Omnimedia	Voyage to Italy	EMME
0181 974 6766	£30	01923 240050	£39.99
Julia Childs Home Cooking	Microsoft	Water Resources	Cosmi & Co
01345 002000	£29.99	01753 620022	£52.95
Key Healthy Indulgences	Softkey	Wine Guide	Microsoft
0181 789 2000	£29.99	01345 002000	£29.99





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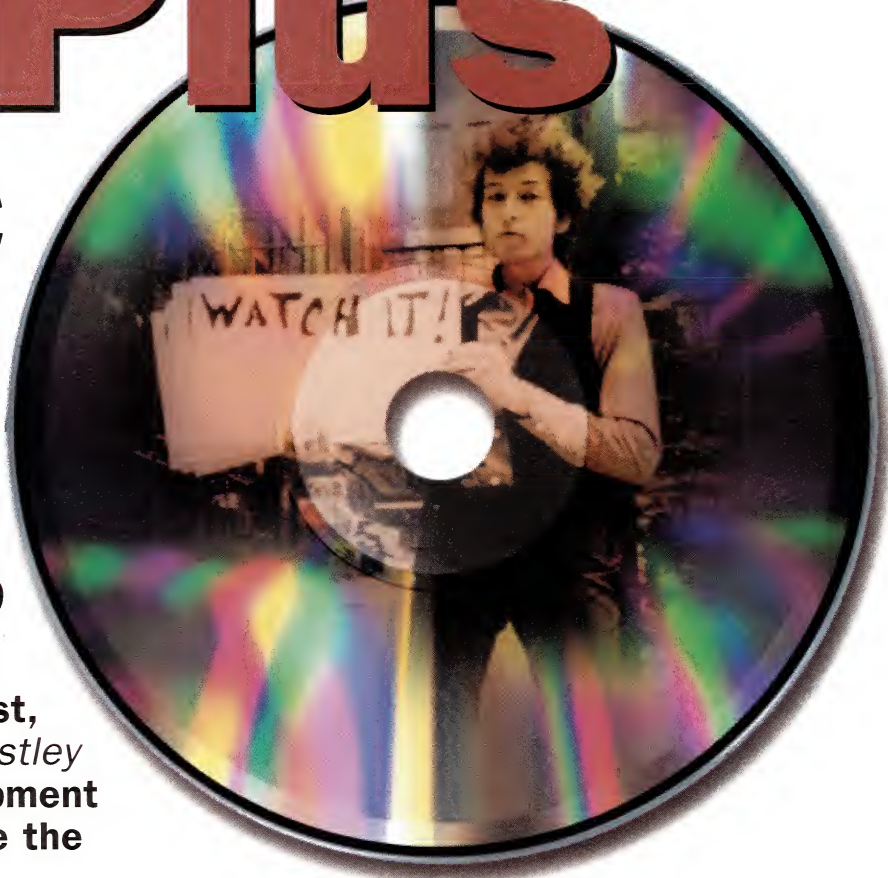
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CD Plus

music format for the **21st** century?

Sony (UK) says it doesn't exist, but our super-sleuth, *John Westley* has tracked down the development that looks set to revolutionise the music industry.



Something remarkable is about to happen to the music industry, and with it, both the computer and CD may at last come of age. Known as 'Enhanced CD' or 'CD Plus' it is intended to sideline those who see computers as the preserve of a train-spotter like minority, and those die hard vinyl and CD fans who believe music should be just about sound. *CD Plus*, previewed in Los Angeles in May this year by Fred Ehrlich, Senior Vice President of Sony New Technology, promises to "take the

excitement of music to the next level by bringing digital quality sound and graphics, text, video and multimedia elements into the mix". With the new format, Sony aims to take the computer into every home in the way that it sought to replace the record player with CD players. In 10 years, Sony have claimed, "Standard CDs will, like vinyl today, be a thing of the past and the computer will sit beside the hi-fi and the home cinema as the music player of the future".

"Standard CDs will, like vinyl today, be a thing of the past and the computer will sit beside hi-fi and home cinema as the music player of the future"

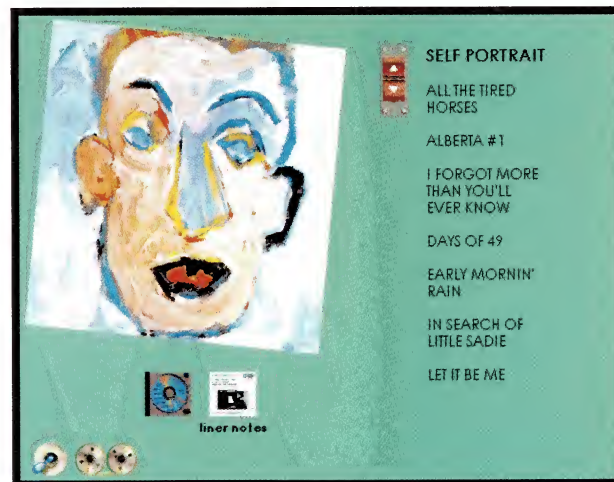
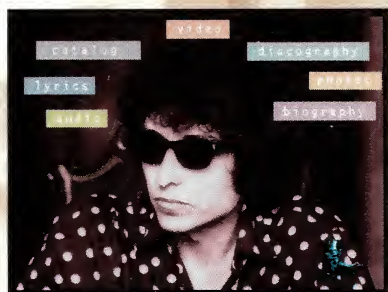
The new format has a crucial advantage over the two other CD specifications currently being discussed: MMCD (Multimedia CD) developed by Sony and Phillips and SD (Super Density CD) under development by the Superdensity Alliance. The first advantage is that both of these are concerned with replacing video rather

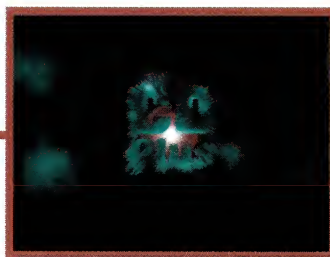
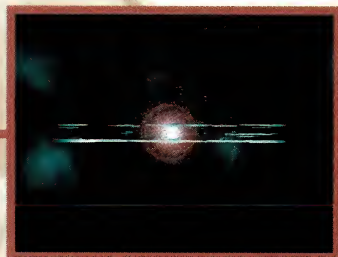
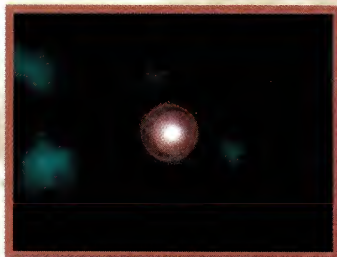
than music. The second is that both will also need new hardware. Whereas *CD Plus* works not only with bog standard music CD players, but also with double speed CD-ROMs which make up 82% of current ROM ownership.

The bad news is that having only just finished replacing your vinyl - and eaten up three years worth of savings in the process - you will have to go through the whole process again. The good news is

▼ **If you want lyrics, you no longer have to read the sleeve. They're all on the disc**

▼ **Bob Dylan is featured in the first CD Plus release**





▲ **CD Plus is about to explode onto our computers and hi-fi systems – literally!**

that, as a reader of *CD-ROM User*, it is likely you will already own a computer and thus not have to go to the expense of investing in new hardware. As seen opposite, the system specifications for the new disks is quite considerable. As a sign of current industry interest in the product, it is significant that Microsoft have marketed Windows 95 partly on the basis of *CD Plus* (enhanced CD software is built in to ensure plug & play) with the staggering claim that people will purchase computers just for the benefits of the new format. Whether this means the PC will be re-designed remains to be seen, but you can be sure that any developments will be detailed in *CD-ROM User* first.

▼ **Combining sound and vision, as well as information is the foundation of CD Plus**



Back catalogue

CD Plus will be marketed alongside standard music CDs and should be priced at around £14.99. By using an identical pricing structure to music CDs, people are far more likely to invest in the new hardware needed to make use of the interactive and cinematic capabilities of the disks. Sony have also set up an in-house design department for the medium which, although more expensive in the short term, makes economic sense if production is intended on a large scale. It is for this reason that the comments of a senior spokesman for Sony are vital "We are in this for the long haul because the re-release of our entire back-catalogue is at stake. We might just see the same sort of revolution as the switch from vinyl to CDs".

"The cleverness and potential resides in enabling CD Plus to play on both your typical music system and on the most basic of MPCs owned by an already existing and reliable consumer base"

CD Plus is not about gadgetry. Sony wants to take on the world music market and the estimated 70 billion currently spent on what Sony sees as a defunct and inadequate medium. The cleverness and potential resides in enabling *CD Plus* to play on both your typical music system and on the most basic of CD-ROMs owned by an

already existing and reliable consumer base. This, above all, means that *CD Plus* stands to become as much a part of our daily lives as the cassette, LP and CD before it.

To clarify *CD Plus* is unavoidable and significant for a minimum of three reasons. First, Sony. This format is getting the full backing of one of the biggest names in music. Secondly, music. *CD Plus* is for people who love music. The computer is simply a



▲ **One of the most famous videos ever, *Subterranean Homesick Blues*, is not actually on the CD!**



▲ **Is this just part of the CD, or a message for the future?**

Hype or Genius? - the Verdict

CD Plus has the potential to transform the music industry for both music companies, musicians and the consumer. If the Dylan release is anything to go by, we are standing in line for a rollercoaster ride of new experiences in the way we listen to music. But this is not all. For a long time there has been a feeling that those of us that use computers for leisure, are sad creatures locked in dark rooms.

Tommy Boyd, the controversial afternoon presenter on Talk radio, said to me recently that "I have never heard anyone [using a computer] talk about love". His feelings are sadly widespread. With *CD Plus*, people like him will finally have to come around to our way of thinking, and realise that computers expand and not diminish horizons. *CD Plus* is available in America now priced at around \$22, expect the UK release of *CD Plus* very soon.

► **Plenty of imagery to grace our screens as well as music to please the discerning ear**



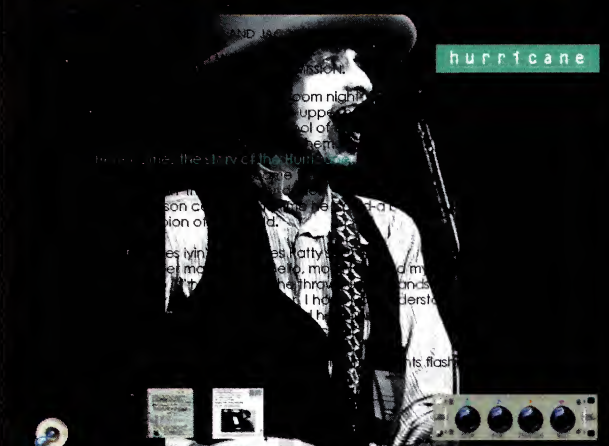
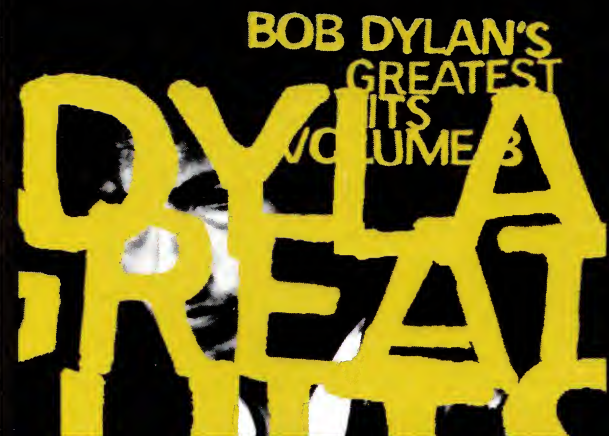
Bob Dylan - Greatest Hits Vol.3 CD Plus

Greatest Hits Vol.3 was released by Sony two months ago to a mostly dis-interested and unimpressed media. The content of the new format mirrors that of the original. If you put the disc in your standard CD player you will get the same 14 tracks. On the surface all that has changed is that the 14 tracks have been split between two disks, seven on each.

The Plus element dramatically improves the whole feeling of the original. Included in the Dylan package are two complete videos of 'Series of Dreams' and the Rolling Thunder live version of 'Tangled up in Blue', a discography, interviews, a photographic slide show, a limited biographical time-line of Dylan.72 - 89, and the notes and credits to all 40 Dylan albums. What this means is that as the tracks play, you get lyrics, slide shows and videos projected into your field of vision - an effect that heightens the appreciation of the music.

It is ironic that Bob Dylan should be leading this revolution. But just remember that Dylan went electric, earning the hatred of a generation for his courage. *CD Plus* is a comparable leap into the future. It may sound like a shot in the dark to the unconverted, there are still those of you who will say that *CD Plus* is a distraction, that it is music that matters. And you would be missing the point. The music is, all that matters. It just becomes more incredible.

It is not often that things can surprise us in the latter twentieth century. Buy this first *CD Plus* release - it rips shreds from previous interactive releases.



means to an end. Last, but not least, the experience (see the exclusive Dylan review opposite).

Technicalities - The Blue Peter Guide to making yourself a CD Plus disc

Technically, the construction of the new disks is relatively simple to understand. The typical compact disk holds approximately 60 minutes of audio leaving about 70 minutes of wasted space that is now used by the new format. Having dismantled the cleverly encrypted Dylan offering, reviewed on this page, the eight minute 'Series of Dreams' video takes up 41 Mb of Yellow book space allowing potentially for each track on the disk to have its own cinematic accompaniment.

"...the re-release of our entire back-catalogue is at stake. We might just see the same sort of revolution as the switch from vinyl to CDs"

The problem that has bugged the music industry and prevented the release of these 'total experience' disks until this point, has been that of the so called 'Track 1 Crisis'. This arose because of the restrictions of the previous 'mixed-mode' standard which insisted that all data must be on the first track, with music data following. The result was that CD players refused to recognise the CDs and retaliated with that appalling high pitched squeaking which you get when trying to get music out of the Microsoft Office 95 ROM. The *CD Plus* solution is to enable true multi-session capability. Phillips' and Sony's real touch of genius however was to both ensure a continued conformity with Red book, Yellow book and Orange book specifications and refuse the simple option of re-designing the

What you need

The minimum specification required to run a CD Plus disc is:

- 486SX 25 MHz or faster
- 8 Mb RAM
- Microsoft Windows 3.1 or higher (Windows 95 Plug & Play)
- 640 x 480 screen resolution, 256 colours (8 Bit)
- Double speed or faster CD-ROM Drive
- 8 Bit sound card.

CD altogether which would have ensured the need for new players.

The first session is taken up by Red book (high-quality audio) tracks, the second by Yellow Book (Mode 2) data. CD audio data is in this way positioned so as to trick the conventional player into treating the disk as composed of music data so ensuring that it will be recognised by standard players. As seen above, Microsoft are backing the format as crucial to Windows 95, and to this end have released *JumpStart 2.0*, a set of tools and resources developed for *CD Plus*. This includes a new version of *WinG*, currently used for fast graphics in games applications under Windows, and *WinToon*, which allows for chroma key movie foregrounds with relevant background shots. Windows 95 CD-ROM File System and plug & play capabilities mean that the *CD Plus* sets itself up and begins without the need for the complexity many loathe in setting up software.

In the near future, *CD Plus* could well be as much a part of our lives as the CD is now. This is a development *CD-ROM User* will be keeping a close eye on, as it will inadvertently cause a computer population explosion as well!

► **Rather than read the sleeve or have no lyrics at all, they are included in the interactive section of the CD Plus disc**

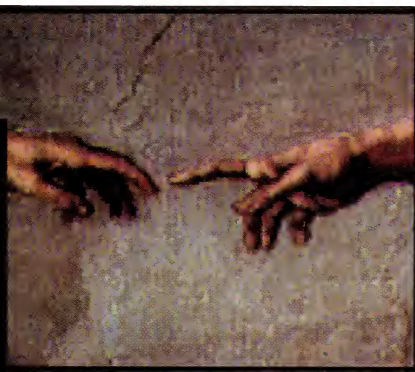




◀ Chekhov is a little-known composer highlighted in An Introduction to Classical Music from Attica Cybernetics



▶ Rock concerts feature on VideoCD, a medium that appears to be ideally suited



◀ This image will be familiar to any lover of the arts. It's actually from the Cistine Chapel painted by MichealAngelo and not a graphic created by The South Bank Show!

that's multimed

CD Plus is not the first attempt at combining music and multimedia. Tony Kaye looks at other formats...

CD Plus is an important step forward for the home entertainment industry. Back in the days of vinyl records, record companies were assured of repeat sales of back catalogue albums because the life of your favourite LP was limited. It's a lot more difficult to scratch a CD, so that element of funding for the fat cats has reduced considerably.

More people are buying CDs and recording them to play in the car, too, so even tape sales are falling (we're not discussing the legal or moral values here, merely the economic issues).

Music and CDs go together like peaches and cream, so it only seems natural that, having the ability to play compact discs on your PC, these elements should be combined and repackaged for this market. Computer processing speeds and 32-bit

operating systems, along with better coding and decoding (Codec) methods have made video a reality on today's computers and there have been many music-based CD-ROMs released.

"The problem with most of these is that the video still fills little more than a postage stamp sized area of the screen."

Peter Gabriel was among the first with the Explora CD and people like Sting, TAFKAP (Prince), David Bowie and others have capitalised on the new medium with varied success. Many music-related products have also been released on us covering all types of music from studying the classics like Beethoven's 5th or Tchaichovsky's 1812 Overture to

encyclopaedic works like The Rock and Roll Years. They are informative and often very entertaining, but the problem with most of these is that the video still fills little more than a postage stamp sized area of the screen.

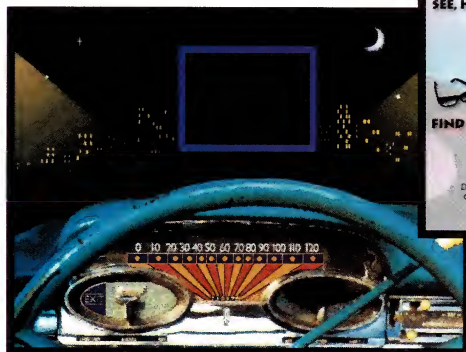
MPEG compression is far more effective and usable for full-screen video, so the music industry has switched to this format for concerts and music video footage. VideoCD and CDi combine music and pictures very well, but you do need a CDi player or an MPEG decoder card in your PC.

Some of the artists to appear on VideoCD include the Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, Sade, Prince and many others. Most consist of videos or concert footage but there are also feature films like Pink Floyd's The Wall and Tommy by The Who

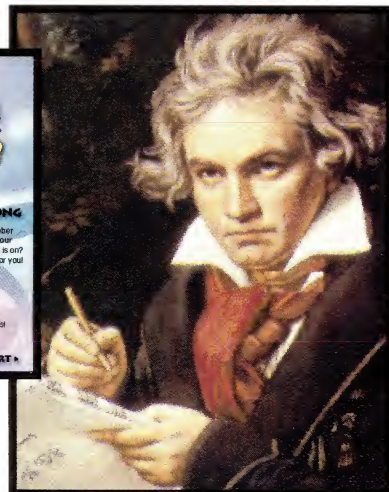
Specialist interest is also covered

▶ **High quality music and images illustrate the works of the great composers**

▼ **Postage stamp movies are shown at the drive-in movie theatre in The Rock'N'Roll Years**

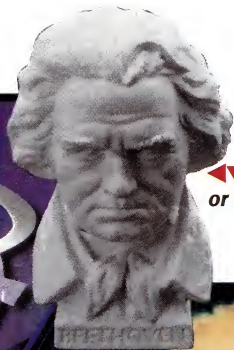


▲ **Music Central 96 has a good index as well as a direct connection to obtain updates from the Internet or MSN**





▲ Microsoft has produced Music Central promising monthly updates on the Net



▼ Ludwig Van or bust?



▲ Do you need the words to this all-time classic? Kids singalong with Dr T

Children are catered for in the multimedia music revolution, too. Singalong discs are commonplace entertaining the youngsters with titles like Dr T's Sing-a-long Kids Classics. The educational element is also satisfied with *World Beat*, a look at music around the world.

Karaoke is another use for the CD-ROM disc. *The Sing Along With...* series includes such delights as *Fireside Love Songs*. All the classic karaoke elements are featured including a nice colourful image overlaid with text on the screen.

The future of music and CDs seems inexorably entwined and, with CD Plus and SD-DVD (Super Density Digital Video Disc) on the horizon, it appears that the MPC has a bright future. Just what the future will ultimately hold is any body's guess, but you can be sure you'll read about it in CD-ROM User first.

▼ slushy and sentimental they may be, but people actually sing to these when they've had a few on Karaoke night



◀ It's not just rock and dance music that gets the multimedia treatment, the Classics get aired as well



Music on VideoCD

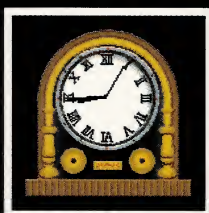


▼ 1956. Even I can't remember that far back – contrary to popular belief!



Screen Savers on CD-ROM - useful or extravagant? *Tony Kaye* examines the genre.

High-Interest Savers



▲ Floating clocks and globes were probably among the first screen savers. These are from the *After Dark* collection

What does a screen saver mean to you? The possibility of saving your screen from permanent damage or an interesting thing to look at when you're taking a break from work?

Years ago, when most monitors were amber, green or white, the light-on-dark text caused a 'ghost' effect on the screen which was known as 'burn-in'. This was avoided by using a screen saver which not only protected the system from this effect, but showed that the machine was still switched on at the same time. The importance of this was seen by Microsoft and it incorporated screen

▼ *The alternative clock! This pervert asks if you want to know the time before 'flashing' at you*



savers with Windows. Since that time, because human nature is to improve, programmers have been creating new modules for this system, offering more choice to the consumer. However, I discussed the problem with a friend of mine, who happens to be a computer engineer. Neither of us could recall a case of burn-in on a colour monitor!

Probably the first alternative (and certainly the most extensive) screen saver to the Windows standards was *After Dark* from Berkeley Systems. Using a modular system that could be added to when necessary, the *After Dark* phenomenon has expanded to almost cult proportions. Now, there are different versions ranging from the 85 or so standard savers to specialist versions including *Looney Tunes*, *Star Trek* (three versions) and the new *Totally Twisted*, offering Flying Toilets and a lot more.

Four or five years ago when computers were delivered with 40 or 80Mb hard drives, the original *Star Trek* screen saver was seen on all self-respecting Trekkers' monitors even though it took up over three megabytes of precious hard disk space. In fact, the research for this feature has increased the used area of my drive by over 33Mb, taken up by the *After Dark* modules alone!



► *The Enterprise is trapped in The Tholean Web from the original series*

Screen Savers and CD-ROM

Screen savers need to be installed on a hard drive to work properly, so don't get fooled into thinking that a CD-based product will run from the disc. In this case, the CD is used purely as a method of distribution and your valuable hard disk space cannot be saved by buying the compact disc version.

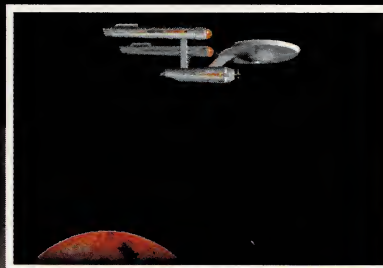
Thinking logically, if a system file like a screen saver did run from the disc, you would have to keep it in the drive at all times or get error messages every time you left the keyboard alone for the required time.

CD allows you to have more different modules and saves the disk swapping that is associated with floppies. This is a trend that we are witnessing more and more as CD-ROM drives become the norm in the home and office.

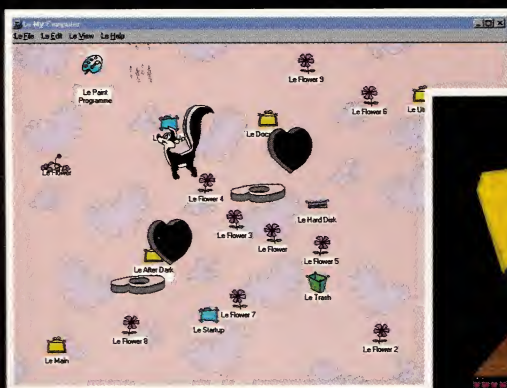
Berkeley Systems are not the only company to cash in on the market. Telstar has recently released two new products exploiting the pin-up market with pictures of Pamela Anderson and the Chippendales. I think I can guess which one of these will sell the best!

Screen savers are used for promoting products as well.

▼ *The Enterprise boldly goes across your screen*



▼ *Anyone for a game of dominoes? This is not for playing, though, just for looking at*



▲ **Pepe Le Pew is in love in this example from Looney Tunes**

► **No, not a gratuitous Pamela pic, but another saver from Telstar**



▲ **Not only a screen saver, but an amusing game as well!**



▲ **Spock wandering around your desktop and using his Tricorder can get tedious if you're a non-Trekkie!**

The *Playtoons* saver featured on our own cover CD back in September promoted the latest edutainment product from Sierra and there have been offerings from Intel, Microsoft and many others. Even Sega got in on the act with a Saturn screen saver! Comic Relief released their own version in time for Christmas last year to raise money and awareness for their good work.

In some offices, screen savers have reached plague proportions. It is not uncommon for a particularly good example to be passed around the workplace and, with sound effects blasting out of multimedia PCs, they can be annoying. The latest craze sweeping anyone with access to the Internet is the Guinness screen saver which is a copy of the advertisement.

Whatever we think of screen savers, they are a part of our lives that just won't go away (not that we want them to). Wherever there's a computer, there will be a screen saver, whether it's the plain Windows standard or one of the many commercial, shareware, freeware, cover mount or promotional offerings. They really have little value, but are entertaining just the same.

▼ **All savers are configurable to suit your own requirements and modules are clearly defined**

▼ **Frankenscreen is one of the Totally Twisted savers. Very wierd...**

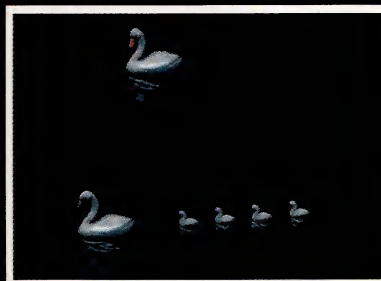


▲ **Swirly thing alert! You don't have to have coherent pictures, you can have images too**



▲ **Life's just a rat race as this screen clearly shows**

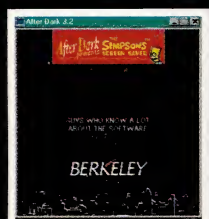
▼ **Serene swans grace the screen. Watch out of the cygnets**



The After Dark phenomenon

After Dark from Berkeley Systems appeared in the early days of computing. Equally famous on the Macintosh, the basic engine allowed modules to be created by third parties as well as Berkeley itself. This led to many new images being available, including themed savers like *Star Trek*, *Looney Tunes*, *The Simpsons* and others. Now you could have your favourite screen heroes (Bart?) protecting your screen.

Over 85 images are available in *The Complete Screen Saver Collection*, which consists of the original program (now updated to version 3.2) and *More After Dark*, the add-on pack. Specialist packages include *Star Trek: The Original Series*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *The Simpsons*, *Looney Tunes* (Bugs Bunny, Taz, Daffy Duck et al.) and the latest addition to the range, *Totally Twisted*. This last set of displays is aimed at a strictly adult audience and includes such delights as *Shoot The Mime*, *Flying Toilets*, *Mowin' Boris* (the cute, playful little cat from the earlier series plus a lawn-mower!) and *Toxic Swamp*, a play on the fish tank seen previously.

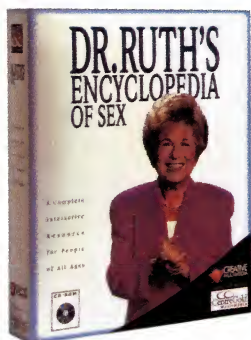


▲ **To boldly go... The Next Generation are not being outdone by Kirk and the boys in the screen saver department**

Dr. Ruth's Encyclopedia Of Sex

Though film, sound, images and text, Dr. Ruth's Encyclopedia of Sex brings together all the knowledge one needs to be sexually literate in the 90's.

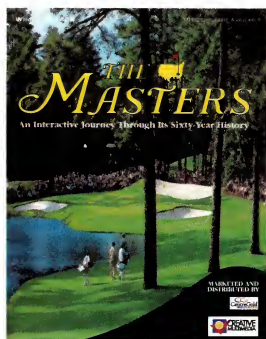
IBM/PC CD-ROM RRP £19.99



The Masters

This informative and entertaining product will keep you captivated with hundreds of images, live action video, player interviews, history of the tournament and a challenging trivia game.

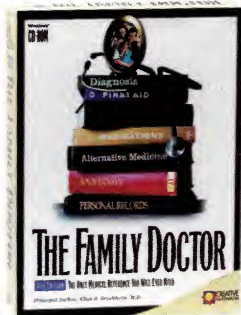
IBM/PC CD-ROM RRP £19.99



The Family Doctor IV

This innovative program provides medical information 24 hours a day and valuable information and insight into your family's health; all in an easy to understand, credible medical guide.

IBM/PC CD-ROM RRP £19.99



Dreams Of Flight

Explore the most fascinating and far reaching technological story of all time - the development of flight. See history through the eyes of those who made it.

IBM/PC CD-ROM RRP £19.99



EXPLORE THE WORLD OF MULTIMEDIA



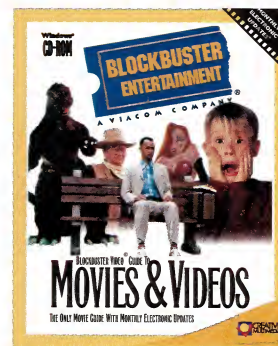
Creative Multimedia is dedicated to bringing the highest quality multimedia products to the largest audience possible, and now in association with CentreGold Multimedia bring their titles to the UK. Creative Multimedia are aware of the current state of multimedia products and the fact that few, if any, of the available offerings exploit the medium to its fullest, and are committed to creating products that use and showcase the technology available.

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Blockbuster Video® Guide To Movies & Videos

Whether you're a serious film buff or just looking for the right movie, this product is a must. Quite simply, it's the most fun, continually up-to-date entertainment guide for the whole family.

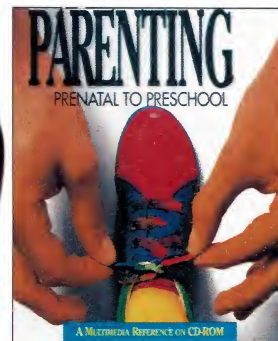
IBM/PC CD-ROM RRP £19.99



Parenting

Prenatal to preschool - Like having the experts on call 24 hours a day. This innovative parenting tool is designed to provide immediate answers to the millions of questions asked by parents and would-be parents.

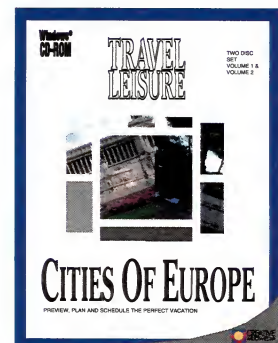
IBM/PC CD-ROM RRP £19.99



Travel & Leisure: The Great Cities of Europe

The Great Cities of Europe is a two CD Set that allows you to explore 15 European cities. Features over 250 video segments and QuickTime Virtual Reality™ technology which allows you to explore famous sites in 360°.

IBM/PC CD-ROM RRP £19.99



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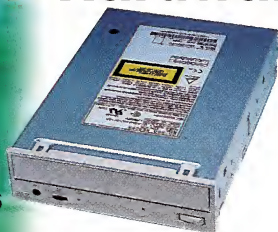
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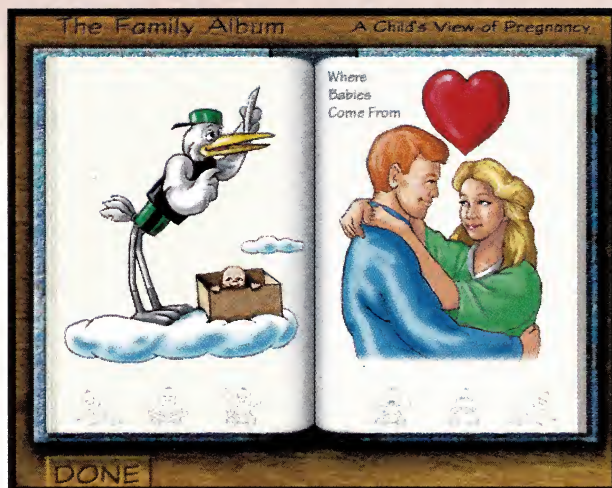
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New drives and innovations including a drive you can mount vertically! You can win one or a four-disc autochanger on page 62





◀ **The EVU3000 shows how the foetus is developing in the womb. You can examine every stage of development as the baby develops into a small human being**



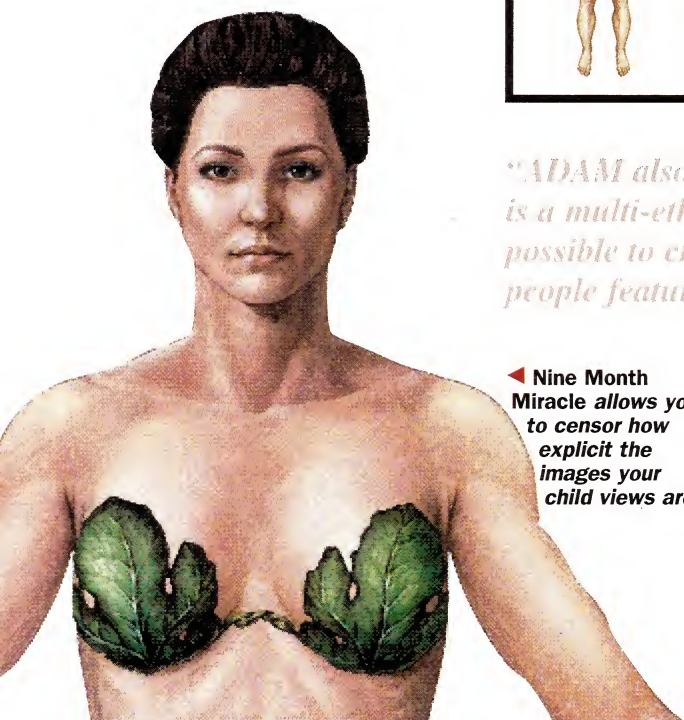
▲ **The presentation for children focuses on a married couple's pregnancy**

With his own **Nine Month Miracle** about to arrive, it somehow seemed appropriate that **NEIL KING** should look at **ADAM's CD** of the same name.



▲ **Emily's New Sister helps explain pregnancy to young children**

▼ **The body pictures can be switched to one of four ethnic groups**



"ADAM also appear to appreciate that this is a multi-ethnic world and have made it possible to change the racial type of the people featured in some parts of the disk."

◀ **Nine Month Miracle allows you to censor how explicit the images your child views are**

Nine Month Miracle

Nine Month Miracle is an interactive guide to pregnancy, from the moment of conception right through to the last aspects of birth. The package is designed to work on a number of levels. One of the prime objectives is to be an information resource which it does in a number of ways. Firstly, it looks at the purely biological aspects of the event, then it puts these aspects into the context of

fears and emotions that surround pregnancy, finally offering advice and commonsense solutions. Secondly, the interactive guide has a section called Emily's New Sister especially for children, it covers the arrival of a new brother or sister and the questions it might provoke in a young enquiring mind.

Because of the explicit nature of pregnancy and sex, there may be some aspects of this disk some parents may not wish to expose younger children to. This is something that ADAM have also thought of, so it's possible to lock some sections away from prying eyes and have genitalia covered with fig

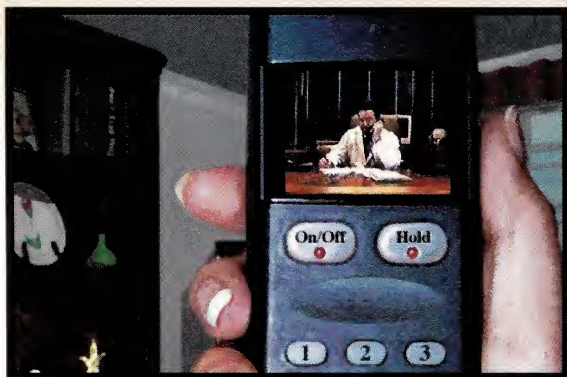
leaves. Whether in censored mode or not, there are also sections where you are advised that parental control may be desired.

The core of the disk is a section called Family Album. This section follows Adam and Eve, the two parents, through the nine month cycle of pregnancy. In monthly stages, it updates what happens during that month, incorporating how the mother's body changes and how the baby is developing. This is done by a combination of text, speech and animation, but for me some of the most stunning images were the body photographs taken by world-renowned photographer Lennart Nilsson.

Another helpful section in *Nine Month Miracle* covers anatomy, it looks at the body of both genders in some depth and explains the roles of various organs and how they are important in the creation of a child.

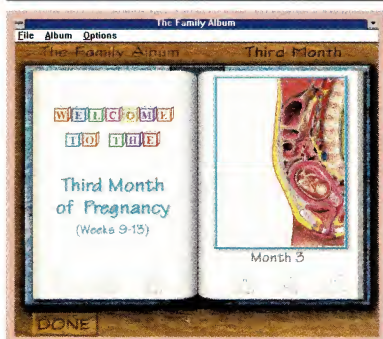
Both Family Album and Anatomy may be a little too complex for some children, which is why the Emily's Little Sister section was included. It covers all the questions a child is likely to have about pregnancy in easily understandable terms. The section also includes a number of games to reinforce some points.

Featured frequently in *Nine Month Miracle*, are a couple of obstetricians who can be asked questions via the



◀ There are a lot of video presentations on the package and some strange presentation screens

▼ Pregnancy development explained in diagram form



cle



index system and the Family Album. The indexing system is very helpful and combined with the search facility, make this a very user friendly package.

"it's possible to look some sections away from prying eyes and have genitalia covered with fig leaves"

The producers of the package are realists. They realise that sometimes things go wrong and many of these issues are covered in depth. For example, as well as containing a video of a child delivered naturally, there is also a video of a caesarean birth. ADAM also appear to appreciate that this is a multi-ethnic world and have made it possible to change the racial type of the people featured in some parts of the disk.

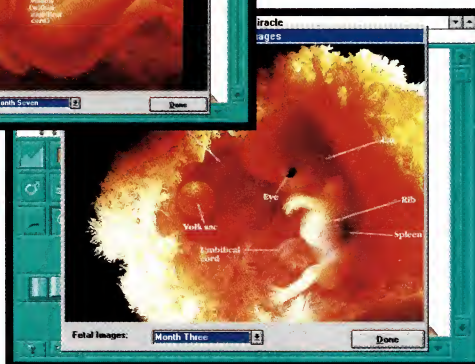
The one weakness I found with this package was that a lot of the disk is presented in the context of a perfect marriage which is not always the case these days and could unintentionally isolate some people, though it was not something I felt detracted from the quality of the information being presented.

As someone who has recently experienced a lot of the events

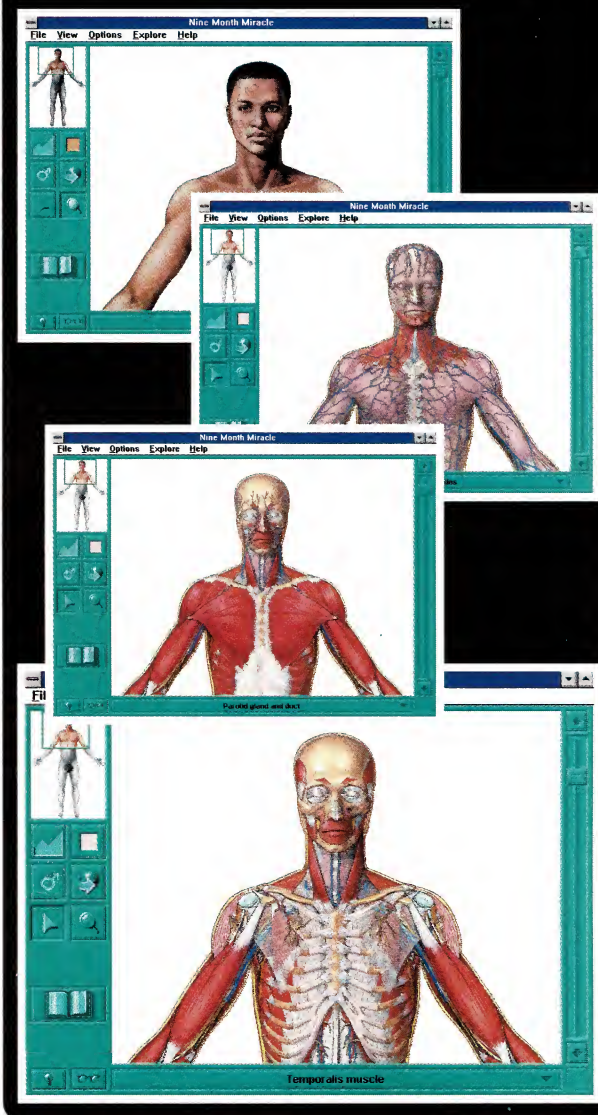
covered here, I can honestly say I'm impressed. Whilst there is no substitute for human resources, this guide compliments them well. Questions and concerns should still be directed at your support staff, but *Nine Month Miracle* certainly makes some aspects of pregnancy easier to understand. It also has the advantage that, unlike a book, it can show sequences in their natural context. Highly recommended as an addition to traditional sources of information.



▶ The annotations help explain every detail month by month



We're all the same, under the *skin!*



◀ If diagrams are not enough, then actual photographs illustrate the process further

cd·rom
USER

▶ **Where to get it:**
Nine Month Miracle is available from ADAM software on 0171 973 9690 and costs £29.99

▶ **What you'll need:**
386-33 or above, Windows 3.1, 4Mb of RAM (8 Mb recommended), SVGA, soundcard, double-speed CD-ROM drive

▶ **Features** **92%**
A month by month guide to pregnancy for parents and children

▶ **Ease of Use** **88%**
The interface and find functions make it easy to find the information you're looking for

▶ **Graphics & Sound** **95%**
When dealing with medical matters, you need to be really precise which *Nine Month Miracle* manages well

▶ **Overall** **94%**
A superb interactive guide to one of life's most precious experiences which is ideal as an additional source of reference

Poisonous Plants

in Britain and Ireland

With a suspicious eye on the Triffid in the corner, *Geoff Spick* checks Kew's vicious vegetation guide to see if it bites.

The British countryside, that paragon of sedate beauty, is in fact a crawling jungle of toxins and danger waiting to strike down the unwary traveller. *Poisonous Plants In Britain And Ireland*, produced by Kew Royal Botanical Gardens and Guys and St. Thomas' Hospital Poisons Unit, is a comprehensive guide the dangers of our native plantlife.

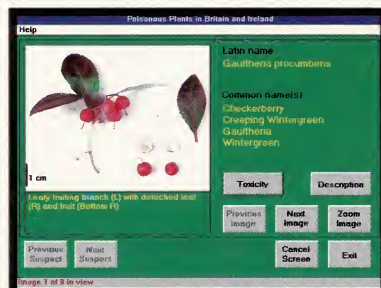
The very pleasant boxed package contains a single CD-ROM and a small, comprehensive manual which has a list of all the plants covered in the back, from Acacia to Yew. Installation is the simplest of affairs and the program is very simple to use. Beyond the introductory screen and a warning about its use are a range of questions about a specific plant you may have encountered. You can bypass this by going to the help menu where you can find a list of all the names of plants in the directory in both latin and by their English names.

"Medical advice is offered and should be followed should someone become ill from a plant"

Also in the help menu is a glossary and bibliography which you can use to learn about unfamiliar terms and find out more information. If you are having trouble with a plant but don't

▲ **Can you identify your leaf? The more information you can provide the more likely you are to get a match**

▼ **Red in nature is usually a warning sign, eating these berries is not a very good idea**



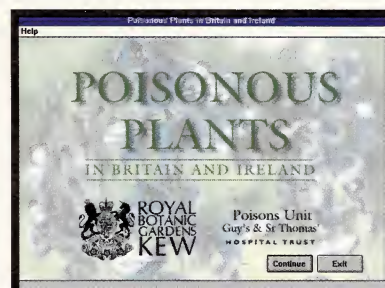
▲ **More disagreeable vegetation, click the Toxicity button to find out about its dangers**

know what it is then you can answer a series of questions that will help the computer narrow down the list of suspects until you have just a handful from which you can pick the guilty one.

The questions try to narrow down the habitat of the plant and what it looked like. When you've got a list of suspect plants, browse through several small photos of each species, read a description and look at its effects on humans. The description of a plant lists its family name and describes the plants root, stem, leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds.

Medical advice is offered and should be followed should someone become ill from the plant. The advice usually consists of taking an affected person to the nearest hospital. Some practical advice includes items like not making people who've swallowed berries vomit them up. If someone has come into contact with a plant then the affected area should be washed and medical advice sought.

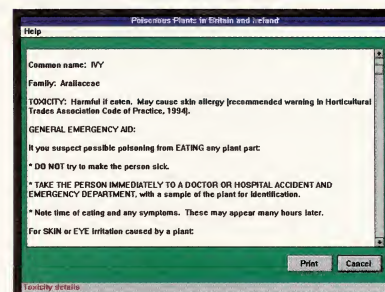
Poisonous Plants has considerable educational value, apart from teaching about the dangers of vegetation it is



▲ **If you need a guide to plants a little more savage than nettles, this is the program for you**

also a useful guide to both the amateur and professional botanist. The price tag suggests that it is more suited to schools and institutions where it will get lots of exposure and be of the widest possible use.

▼ **Good old Ivy, from the Araliaceae family and definitely not sandwich material**



► **Where to get it:**
Poisonous Plants in Britain and Ireland is published by HMSO on 0181 873 8236 and costs £89.99

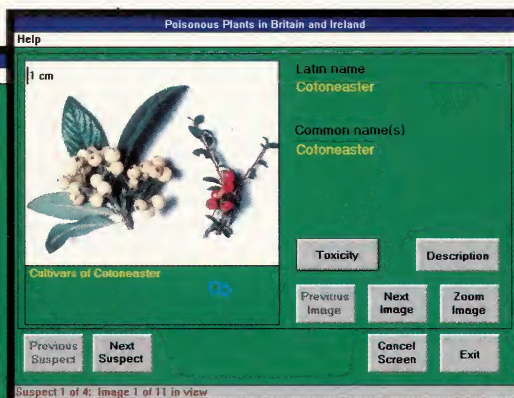
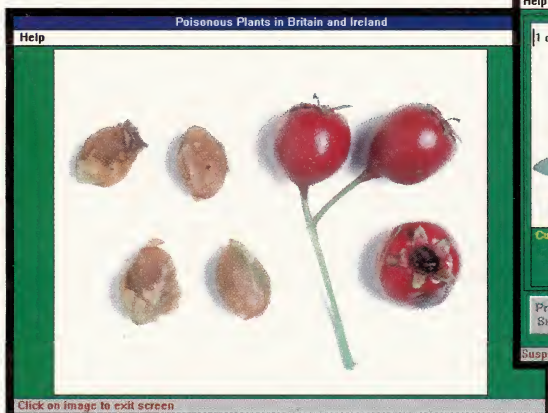
► **What you'll need:**
386 & 4Mb RAM minimum, 486 & 8Mb recommended, CD-ROM Drive and Windows 3.1

► **Features** 75%
Over 200 plants with photos, descriptions and a list of effects on the human

► **Ease of Use** 80%
A very simple interface makes this one of the easiest packages to use

► **Graphics & Sound** 65%
Only the pictures are really worth mentioning, everything else is plain Windows

► **Overall** 75%
An expensive piece of specialist software that may prove useful in education and as a reference for botanical experts and novices alike



▲ **Cotoneaster, a pleasant looking little plant, but with hidden dangers**

Historical travelogue CDs tend to suffer from one overriding fault – superficiality. How do you capture the essence of a place in one, or if you're feeling extravagant, two discs? Geoff Harris sees how EMME Interactive rises to the challenge...

A Voyage Through Egypt



Trying to encapsulate 4,000 years of civilisation in a single program is almost as taxing as building a pyramid, but EMME Interactive, the producers of *A Voyage Through Egypt* do an admirable job of capturing the culture that spawned Tutankhamen, the Sphinx and all those dog-headed deities with names you can never remember.

Let's emphasise right away that this disc is only interested in Ancient Egypt – there's nothing about the place after about 300AD, but let's face it, most tourists go there for the old stuff anyway.

What's immediately impressive about this program is its elegant, uncluttered interface, embellished by haunting music – some of which is good enough to market in its own right. There are four main sections: History, an interactive timeline of Ancient Egypt with key names and events hypertextually linked to more detailed explanations; Voyage, which takes you down the River Nile, offering slide shows and textual discussions of interesting places along the way; Usage and Custom, a guide to Ancient Egyptian society and culture; and finally, Gallery, which uses text, pictures and full motion video to describes the pantheon of Egyptian gods, key historical figures and, most interestingly, the great Egyptologists – controversial figures like Howard Carter, who discovered Tutankhamen,

and Champillion, who made sense of the Rosetta Stone.

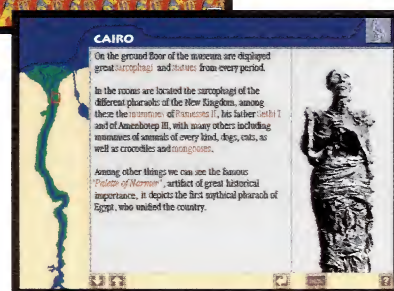
Some of the sections work better than others, but all do a good job of introducing Ancient Egypt to the average user. The best sections are Voyage and Usage and Custom, since these contain the richest descriptions of great sites such as The Temple of Karnak and The Valley of the Kings. There's also loads of cross-referencing, which is great if you get your Thoth mixed up with your Seth, or want to linger again over the videoclip of Tutankhamen's tomb. While the entries in Usage and Custom are a little on the brief side – especially the section on mummification, which is frustratingly short on gory detail – a lot of ground is covered in this program. Ever wanted to learn about

"There's loads of cross-referencing, which is great if you get your Thoth mixed up with your Seth"

the footwear of the period or what kind of music set the Pharaohs' toes tapping? It's all here, and more.



▲ **The timeline in the History section. Hypertext links give more info, but it's all a bit sketchy**



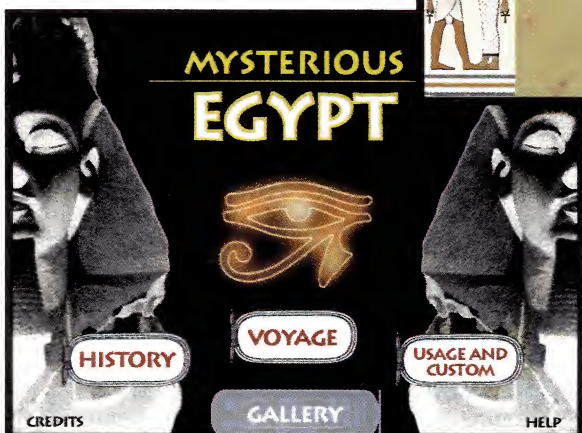
▲ **Ramses II – not looking too bad for a man thousands of years old**

▼ **See a video clip of Tutankhamen's tomb in the section on Howard Carter, the Englishman who discovered the amazing relics**



▲ **The highlights of the gallery are Explorers (see right) and the pantheon of gods**

◀ **The main panel to A Voyage Through Egypt**



cd-ROM USER

► **Where to get it:**
A Voyage Through Egypt is available from EMME Interactive on 01923 240050 and costs £39.99

► **What you'll need:**
At least a 386PC with 4Mb of RAM, Windows 3.1, SVGA display, single-speed CD, soundcard, speakers, mouse

► **Features** 85%
A memorable trip around Ancient Egyptian culture that focuses on archaeological sites, myth and religion and everyday life.

► **Ease of Use** 90%
Very easy to use; divided into five coherent sections, with lots of hypertext links for cross referencing

► **Graphics & Sound** 80%
Marvellous pictures and diagrams, although video clips are a little thin on the ground. Haunting music, but commentary rather sparse

► **Overall** 90%
A great primer on Ancient Egypt for the average observer. The program's strong points definitely outweigh its flaws (like the odd typo!)

S Through *History*

A Voyage Through *Italy*

This second program takes a similar approach to *A Voyage Through Egypt*, taking users on a tour of Italy's great cultural treasures. Again, the focus is on the most celebrated periods of the country's cultural history, in this case the Roman Empire and the Renaissance, so those with an interest in modern civilisation may be disappointed to the short shrift given to post 19th-century developments. In other words, *A Voyage Through Italy* is aimed at the mainstream browser rather than the cultural cognoscenti.

"The producers of A Voyage Through Italy really went to town on the interface. It's astonishingly beautiful"

That said, however, the producers of *A Voyage Through Italy* really went to town on the interface. It's astonishingly beautiful – admittedly, it would be hard to mess up a multimedia page with the kind of visual material provided by Michelangelo or Titian, but this still doesn't detract from the designers' achievement.

As with *A Voyage Through Egypt*, the program is divided into logical sections.

The best ones are Places, which subdivides into guided tours of the cultural glories of Rome, Florence,

Venice and Sienna; Artists, which presents the cream of Italian painters; Italian Panoramas; which considers the impact of landscape on the national culture; and Rooms of Power, which describes the villas, gardens and palaces favoured by the colourful popes, monarchs and merchants that populate Italian history.

Many of the great paintings and sculptures are presented full screen, showing them in their true glory, and the whole endeavour seems much more coherent than *The Medici*, a comparable EMME effort reviewed in *CD-ROM User* issue 17. The biggest problem with that program was lack of context, but adequate historical and cultural background is provided in *A Voyage Through Italy*, again through intelligently placed hypertext links.

Many of the criticisms of *A Voyage Through Egypt* also apply to this program; some of the textual descriptions are rather brief, and the video clips, when they appear, are rather lacklustre.

Also, you're left with the impression that Italy is just a vast repository of treasures from a bygone age rather than a modern, dynamic European culture; a section on contemporary Italian art and design would have presented a more balanced picture, and helped to lift the rather stuffy 'museum' atmosphere that permeates an otherwise excellent program.

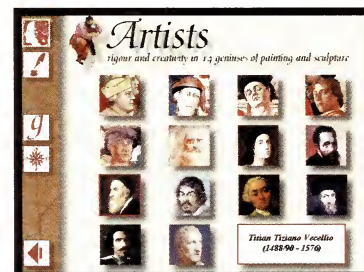
▼ **A highlight of the program is the tour of the great buildings of Imperial Rome. Ah, to have been there...**



▲ **The exquisitely designed main panel to A Voyage Through Italy. Bellissimo!**



▲ **Places covers four great cities – Florence, Rome, Sienna and Venice**



▼ **One of the best sections covers the effect of the landscape on classic Italian art**

◀ **The dream team of Italian art and sculpture. Click on the portrait for a more detailed analysis**

cd.rom

USER

► **Where to get it:**
A Voyage Through Italy is available from EMME Interactive on 01923 240050 and costs £39.99

► **What you'll need:**
At least a 386PC with 4Mb of RAM, Windows 3.1, SVGA display, single-speed CD, soundcard, speakers, mouse

► **Features** 85%
Sumptuously presented tour of the most celebrated periods of Italian cultural history.

► **Ease of Use** 90%
Again, very easy to use; divided into logical sections, with lots of cross referencing

► **Graphics & Sound** 75%
The graphics are superb but there are few video clips and even less audio commentary

► **Overall** 85%
An admirable exploration of Italian culture that loses points because of its predictability – using a wider canvas would have made for a more satisfying multimedia experience

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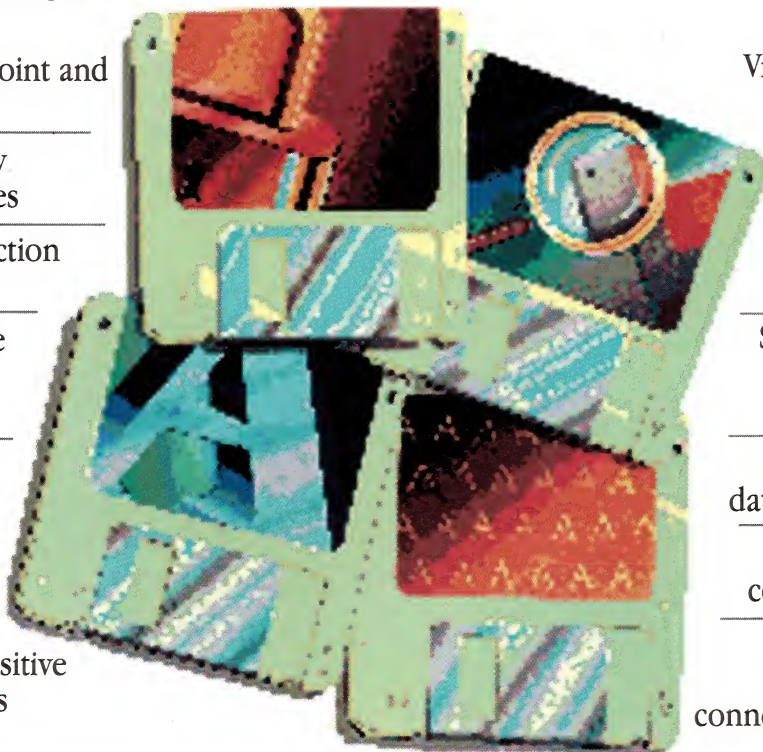
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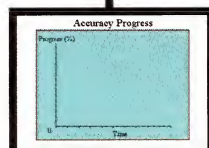
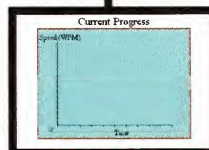
As more and more people start to use keyboards, the need to learn how to type becomes more important. *NEIL KING* looks at an on-line solution.

Flying Fingers



▲ The metronome provides that extra pressure, just in case you need it

▼ There are a number of ways your skills and progress are measured



Flying Fingers is an on-line keyboard and typing tutor, but when it comes to typing speed and accuracy there's no quick solution.

The program works in two ways. When you place its icon in your start group it kicks off a background process that continually analyses your use of programs, speed and accuracy. Then it stores this information until you want to access it.

Its prime role is that of substitute teacher. Through a series of structured lessons you are gradually taught how to touch type. The lessons are structured to keep you from looking at the keyboard and force you to concentrate on the screen instead. This is partly achieved by displaying a duplicate keyboard on the screen that copies the keystrokes you make on your own keyboard. The package is graduated so that if you've experience or are already more than a two finger typist, tasks can be made to stretch your abilities further.

Like all good teachers, *Flying Fingers* assumes you know nothing and consequently starts off with the most basic of exercises, namely identifying what keys are where. From there you learn which fingers to use for the keys on the ASD line. The reason that line was chosen is because it represents the midpoint in line use; the QWERTY line has the most vowels and the ZXC line contains the least used letters of the alpha keys.

Gradually more and more complex skills are introduced and tested. The

▼ A red letter means you have made a mistake, blue means you've spelt the word correctly

DAD_LADS ; LAG_KAD ASK



▲ The coloured keys tell you where your fingers should be to help you become more proficient

► The scales tell you how well you're doing during the exercise so you can monitor your progress



tests are performed by following a series of letters that are on a separate screen which you simply duplicate on your own keyboard. A word of warning here - the tutor only works in upper-case, so if you've forgotten to switch to Caps Lock you get them all wrong. You can even have a metronome to help with pace if you desire.

"Through a series of structured lessons you are gradually taught how to touch-type."

Errors show up red on the screen, and it's impossible to go back and correct them. At the end of the test you are given your results as a wpm (words per minute) count and an accuracy percentage. This is then compared to the results you were set or set yourself earlier. As you work your way through the lessons both aspects should be improving.

Every lesson starts with a quick tutorial via one of a number of cartoon instructors. The lessons can also be practised via any one of the four games included in the package. Whilst fun to play, all the games have been designed to put your newly acquired skills and your perception to the test.

That *Flying Fingers* is not an instant solution has been recognised by the package designers, who have included a scheduler to try and help you obtain the discipline you'll need to get the most out of the package. That said, it doesn't take too long before you notice gradual increases in your wpm

and accuracy scores.

The cosmopolitan nature of Europe is reflected by the fact that the package includes four language variants English, French, German and Spanish. Almost as an aside, a section has been included to help you lay out business letters.

Generally the success of on-screen tutorials like this boils down to two main factors. The first and most important factor is you to get the most out of this package, you've got to put the work in. If you play at it or lack the discipline to study alone, then you're not going to reap the benefits. Almost as important is the package itself. If it doesn't deliver the right information in an inspiring way, it's going to make it all the more difficult for you to succeed. Fortunately, *Flying Fingers* does deliver the information and also has a variety of ways to help you learn and retain that information.

cdrom USER

► **Where to get it:**
Flying Fingers is available from Europress on 01625 859333 for £19.99

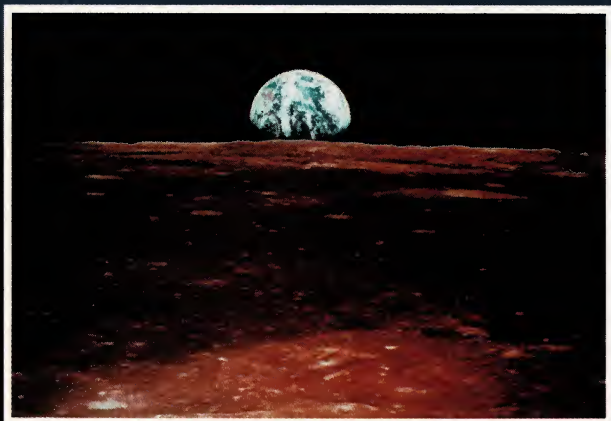
► **What you'll need:**
386DX, 4Mb RAM, Windows 3.1 or 95, SoundBlaster or compatible soundcard, mouse

► **Features** **82%**
A well structured series of lessons designed to improve the speed and accuracy of your typing

► **Ease of Use** **85%**
Even the most keyboard-phobic person will be able to cope with this

► **Graphics & Sound** **65%**
These are both basic, but don't need to be anything else

► **Overall** **83%**
If you work at it, it'll do you proud. The increase in speed can be dramatic if you apply yourself to the lessons



▲ Earthrise from the Moon. One of the great sights reported by the Apollo crews



RedShift

Our very own Urban Spaceman, Tony Kaye explores the universe and discovers how infinitely big space really is...

As long as man has looked up to the sky, he has wondered what's up there. The earth was considered the centre of the universe and everything else revolved around it, but we now know that's not true. Man's fascination with space has evolved through the years from stories to books, films and, more importantly, exploration.

Once in a blue moon, a product comes along that makes you realise what CD-ROM was designed for. Such

a product was *RedShift* from Maris Multimedia, which was rewarded with no less than 11 awards for its content and presentation.

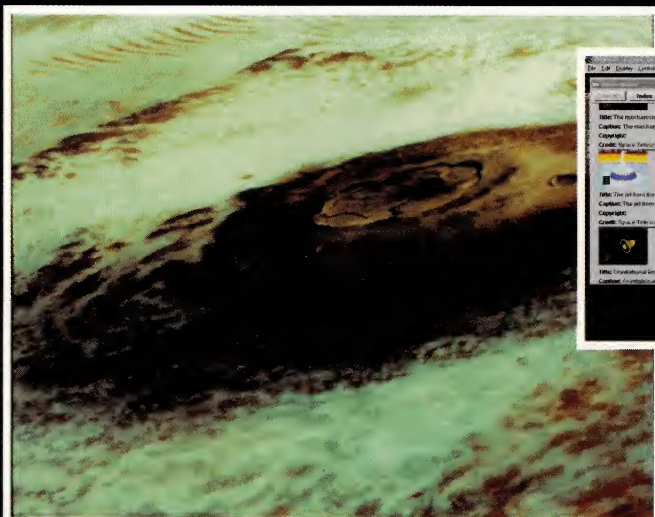
"The VR simulations are nothing short of spectacular and give a real insight to the movements of planets, stars, asteroids, comets, moons and everything else up there."

How do you improve on near perfection? What could possibly be done to a product as good as this to improve it?

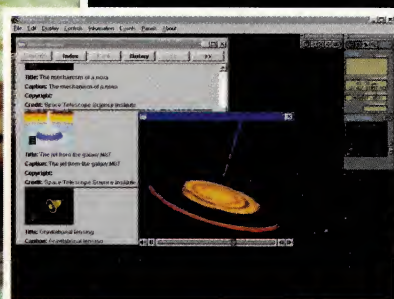
The answer to these questions can be found in *RedShift 2*, an outstanding CD that takes the original, shakes it up and presents the information that is not only clear and concise, but visually stunning and vastly entertaining. High praise indeed from a reviewer not known for going overboard, but believe me, this is one program that anyone even slightly interested in astronomy should have in their collection - no, in their CD-ROM drive.

So what is this wonderful disc? It's described as Multimedia Astronomy or The Ultimate Desktop Planetarium and both versions are applicable. From the moment you install and start *RedShift 2*, the quality is evident. A choice is offered - work on your own or take a guided tour. The latter offers 10

▼ Satellite picture of a volcano on Venus, one of many from the probes that are regularly launched to explore the Solar System



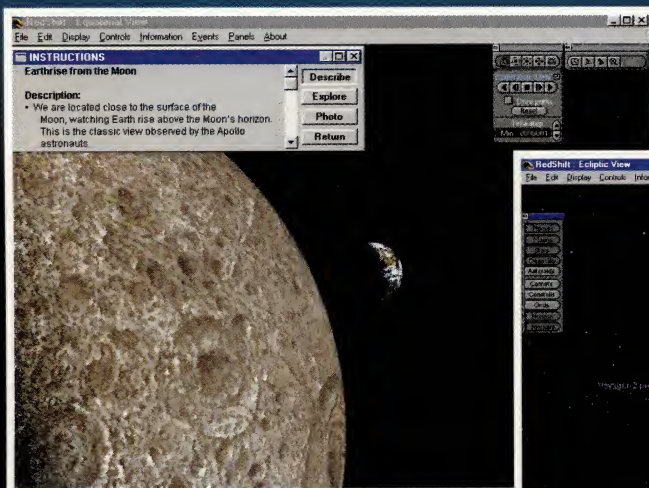
▲ This is the 'Old Faithful' of space with a geyser that is over 200 million miles long and erupts continuously



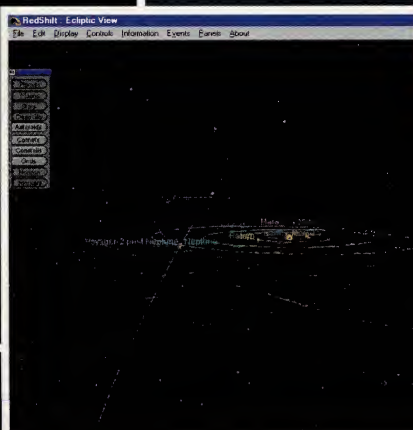
▼ More than just the stars is explained, here is a film clip of a walk in space



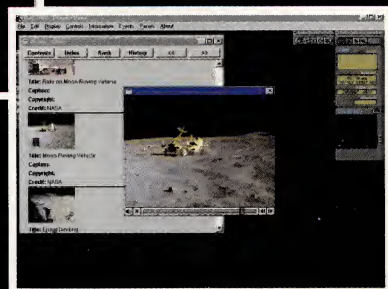
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See also:
Dictionary of Astronomy
Photo gallery



▶ The tutorial shows how to get the best view of Earthrise



▶ Diagram of Voyager travelling through our Solar System showing its projected path



▶ Drag racing on the Moon! one of the ground crew actually comments that it appears that the vehicle is in the air more than it is on the ground

t2



different tours, all beautifully illustrated with an intelligent, but not patronising, commentary. Subjects cover every aspect of astronomy from the Big Bang to the future - literally!

"It's described as Multimedia Astronomy or The Ultimate Desktop Planetarium and both versions are applicable."

Over 700 high quality photographs of space are included and can be accessed from the Photo Gallery. The Penguin Dictionary of Astronomy is available at a mouse-click as is a movie gallery with a range of fascinating clips including a drive on

the surface of the Moon.

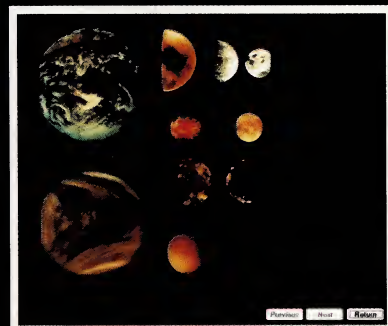
The VR simulations are nothing short of spectacular and give a real insight to the movements of everything in the skies.

From the Dictionary, hypertext links take you to photos or video clips of relevant points and you can even view the skies as they would have appeared at any time from 4,000 BC to 10,000 AD.

RedShift 2 is quite simply, one of the best CDs I've ever seen! All that's missing are the words 'Don't Panic' in large friendly letters on the cover. It's impossible to do justice to a product like this in words, so look at the pictures on these pages and run the rolling demo on the cover CD. Better still, drop what you're doing and run to your local software shop and buy it.



▶ Filming from Rover - the Lunar Excursion Vehicle. The Apollo missions carried the first people to drive on the Moon



▶ The nine planets of the solar system, plus our own Moon in detail

▼ Detailed diagrams explain everything clear enough for even me to understand!



▶ The shape of galaxies to come. All is revealed in the guided tour



cd-ROM USER

▶ **Where to get it:**
RedShift 2 is available from Maris on 0171 488 1566 and costs £49.99

▶ **What you'll need:**
386SX, Windows 3.1 or later, 4Mb RAM, soundcard

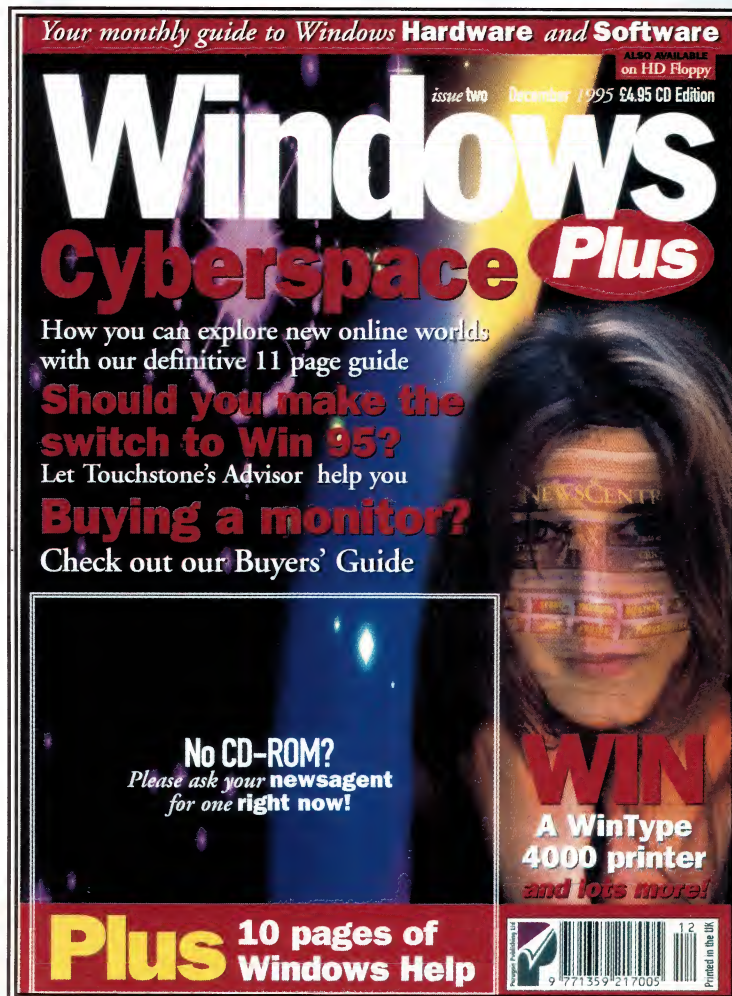
▶ **Features** 96%
Everything you always wanted to know about space and more

▶ **Ease of Use** 92%
May take a little while to navigate on your own

▶ **Graphics & Sound** 93%
Stunning animations and film clips

▶ **Overall** 94%
Quite simply, superb. Our recommended award will be the first of many to land on this excellent product

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Casper Brainy Book

From cartoon cutie to big screen effect, Casper finally makes it to the multimedia PC. Geoff Spick knows who to call

Casper caused a few ripples in the cinema this year with special effects galore and the usual rash of spin off products from lunch boxes to bendy toys. It was only a matter of time before he appeared on the PC and now he's arrived, with his nasty uncles in tow.

After setting the difficulty level, you can launch the program. The *Brainy Book* is a twelve page tale of the adventures of Casper and the two humans, Dr. Harvey and Kat. The people are here to find the ghosts that haunt Whipstaff Manor and it doesn't take long for the spooky residents to show their faces.

The words to the story can be narrated by either a male or female voice, depending on which human you picked at the menu screen. Each word is highlighted as it is spoken and can be clicked on for repetition after the narrator has finished the page. The humans and ghosts are animated and as with most multimedia books, there are many hot points to find within the

pictures. These range from resting animals to vibrating suitcases and when clicked on reveal an animated effect accompanied by a suitably amusing sound or tune.

Within the pages are three hidden keys that unlock doors on the menu screen to three ghostly games, hosted by Fatso, Stretch and Stinkie. Fatso has several sets of jigsaw puzzles for you, the completion of which is rewarded with a clip from the movie. A word finding puzzle uses a grid of hidden words, you must match them with whatever shape Stinkie has turned in to suck him in with the vacuum to free Dr. Harvey. Finally Stretch challenges youngsters to a spelling game, which offers the children the most challenge.

"It was only a matter of time before he appeared on the PC and now he's arrived, with his nasty uncles in tow."

The difficulty level can be adjusted as the child progresses through the program and if you have access to a printer then the story pages can be printed as outline drawings and coloured in by the youngsters.

Casper has loads of potential to be an interesting and innovative product but it feels remarkably bland in the light of some other titles. While the presentation is of the highest quality it really larks sparkle. The puzzles are fun, but there are only three and the story, at 12 pages, is far too short.

▼ **Inside the Manor and what's this?**
Dr. Harvey owns a teddy! Kat looks suitably unimpressed.

◀ **Your hosts, the ghosts have a warped and twisted sense of humour, respect!**

Ghostly Jigsaws

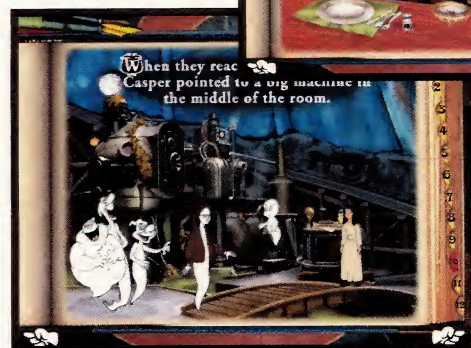


▲ **Top jigsaw action.** The three levels of puzzles let children improve their problem solving skills. The first level uses fewest and simplest pieces while the medium puzzle introduces regular jigsaw shapes. The last one shuffles the shapes and they have to be rotated in 90 degree steps. Finishing a puzzle results in a video clip from the film being shown.



▲ **Dr. Harvey and Kat (the girl, not the cat) arrive at Whipstaff Manor to find the stunt mouse hard at work**

▶ **Casper the over-friendly ghost tries to impress Kat by wearing a comedy mushroom hat**



cd-rom
USER

► **Where to get it:**
Casper Brainy Book is available from Random House on 0171 973 9000 and costs £29.99

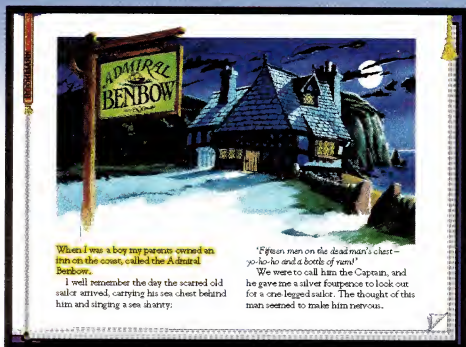
► **What you'll need:**
486 Processor, double speed CD-ROM, 4Mb RAM (8Mb recommended), soundcard and Windows 3.1

► **Features** **78%**
Twelve pages of animated story with loads of hot spots and three fun games to play

► **Ease of Use** **80%**
Everything is very simple to use, although there are some annoying loading delays

► **Graphics & Sound** **75%**
The graphics on the whole are rather boring, considering the effects used in the movie

► **Overall** **77%**
Casper will keep most kids happy for a while but there isn't really enough to hold their interest



◀ And so it begins. From this quiet coastal inn, young Jim is about to be dragged to the other side of the Atlantic in search of gold



With his timbers well and truly shivered, John Dolan gets his hooks into a classic pirate tale bought to life with multimedia.

Treasure Island



▲ Robert Louis Stevenson gets a deserved mention as the author of a story that has been loved by generations

Robert Louis Stevenson has stimulated millions of imaginations with his celebrated story of young Jim Hawkins versus Long John Silver and his gang of cut-throats. As part of the Living Classics series, *Treasure Island* is presented page by page with pictures, narration, sound effects, animations and games to keep young readers enthralled.

A map of the locations is used as the menu, click on one of the nine numbers and you can jump to any point in the story, or simply start from the beginning in the Admiral Benbow Inn. The story is told from Jim's perspective and each page is animated to follow the plot. The words are emboldened as they are read and at the end of a page unfamiliar terms are highlighted in green, these can be clicked on for a definition or more information, such as how the author got his ideas for writing.

The tale leads from the Inn to the port of Bristol where the good ship

Hispaniola takes the characters to Treasure Island. Ben Gunn, Blind Pew and Captain Flint, the parrot with a fetish for gold, all make their appearances and inspire fear and fun in the reader, whatever their age.

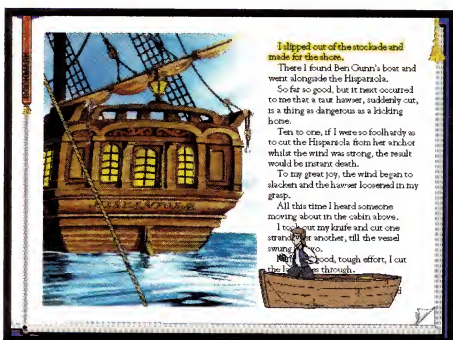
"Treasure Island is still very much a gripping yarn in its own right with fascinating characters and a fine tale of good versus evil."

A bell pull at the top right corner of the screen will call up a menu which allows you to go back a page, return to the map or advance with the story. In the top left is a bookmark which can be used to keep your place in the story while returning to the map screen, and at the bottom right is a turned up page corner which is used to jump to the next page.

Within each scene is a hotspot which produces a surprise effect, from the Statue of Liberty appearing on the map to a quartet of trumpeting puffins. The audio is presented in Dolby Surround Sound and the voices are provided by Shakespearean actors who enunciate every word with clarity, though the pirate accents are a bit bizarre.

Also on the map are four games. A naval cannon game, where the aim is to get the right angle and the correct amount of powder in your cannon to sink the pirate ships which move around trying to hit your vessel. Another is set at the stockade where

◀ Row, row, row your boat and perform minor acts of sabotage. Just another day in the life of the average gold seeker



▲ A hero with a great big hand on his shoulder is a hero in trouble, and it's all the fault of that talking, squawking parrot

you and your shipmates must fight off the attacking pirates. These games are a welcome diversion, along with the hotspots, providing some entertainment for younger users who may get tired of the story.

Aside from the narration, there is also a section which looks at the novel and its author, information which makes this product much more than just a pirate tale. Though *Treasure Island* is still very much a gripping yarn in its own right with fascinating characters and a fine tale of good versus evil. The multimedia presentation is top notch with fine graphics and sound, and there is not an American accent in sight. All this makes *Treasure Island* a fine example of a computer storybook that everyone will enjoy.

▼ Jim is a good lad, although the cravat looks a bit dodgy and the foppish hair is a worrying sign



cd·rom USER

► **Where to get it:**
Treasure Island is available from Europress Software on 01625 859444 and costs £19.99

► **What you'll need:**
 386 processor, 4Mb of RAM, 486 with 8Mb recommended, CD-ROM Drive, soundcard, Windows 95 or 3.1

► **Features** **85%**
 A classic tale represented by over 50 screens of animated graphics and quality voices

► **Ease of Use** **88%**
 With the simple point and click interface, everything works very smoothly indeed

► **Graphics & Sound** **90%**
 Excellent drawings with neat animations, the stereo sound is excellent and the voice quality is very high

► **Overall** **88%**
 The multimedia version of *Treasure Island* gives all the impact of the book with the added bonus of great drawings, perfect voices, background information and four games to play

The Fight for Chromos Continues!

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Proving there's nothing up his sleeve except his arm, **NEIL KING** checks out the wonderful world of magic, but can he show us how to cut a young lady in half?

It's all

Secrets of Magic

Secrets Of Magic with Dikki Ellis is an interactive guide to conjuring and illusion. Follow the simple step by step instructions and before long you'll be saying phrases like, here's three cups and three balls as if it's second nature.

The package comes in two parts, a CD-ROM and a video. One of the reasons for the inclusion of the tape is that the video on the CD is a bit on the small side, making it difficult to always see what's going on.

The interface is simple to use. When the package starts you find yourself in room one. On the table in front of you are a number of props. Simply click on the props that are of interest to be taken through to a demonstration of a trick that utilises

that piece of equipment.

All of the demonstrations follow the same pattern. First of all Dikki Ellis performs the trick, then he explains it.

Also displayed as part of room one is a television set. Once clicked, this takes you into an introduction video. There's also a neon E which takes you into an Encyclopaedia and a key that takes you to room two, which is remarkably similar to the first, but with a different array of props on the table.

Browsing through the Encyclopaedia reveals four basic areas, table tricks, standing tricks, history of magic, including a biography of Dikki and helpful tips.

The History of Magic is a brief guide to conjuring through the centuries. It covers first performance of famous tricks and name checks a few of the greats, but it lacks any real depth or sophistication. The final section, Tips, seeks to reinforce points that were made during the videos, namely practice, practice, practice, preparation and presentation.

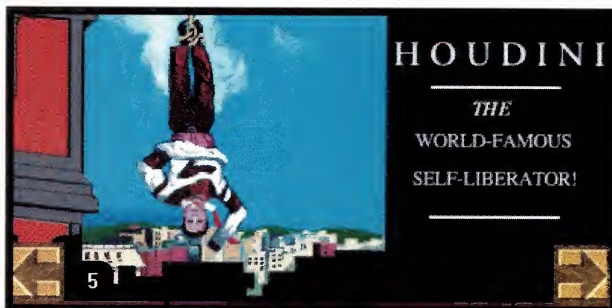
The videos offer concise information. Literally within one or two viewings it's easy to pick up the basics of the illusion. All that needs to be added from that point is the finesse and self belief and that's going to take a little practice.

Secrets Of Magic is in some ways self defeating. If it is too successful, no-one will be interested in the tricks, but that is unlikely to happen.

If push comes to shove, I like this, but not a lot.



▲ This man is called Dikki and he wants to teach your children magic



▲ Houdini, the greatest escape artist ever?

▶ What's magic without the obligatory pretty assistant? Less sexist?



Two rooms of illusion



▲ Spot 10 differences between magic room one and room two



▼ Throughout it's history, magic has been about illusion and deception

cd-rom USER

▶ **Where to get it:**
Secrets Of Magic with Dikki Ellis is published by Fast Track Software(01923 495496) and costs £39.95

▶ **What you'll need:**
Windows 3.1, MPC2 CD-ROM, VGA Graphics card, 486 or higher

▶ **Features** 60%
A guide to basic magic and presentation plus brief history of magic

▶ **Ease of Use** 80%
Simple point and click makes it a breeze to use

▶ **Graphics & Sound** 80%
Plenty of good quality though small videos supported by the real thing

▶ **Overall** 72%
The kids'll love it provided their friends haven't got copies. Capable of taking the magic out of childhood

an Illusion

Learn the Art of Magic

Learn The Art Of Magic with Jay Alexander is a stylishly presented tuition package for those that want to learn the arts of illusion and conjuring. Presented by US magician Jay Alexander, the package has panache and depth - the designers have obviously put thought into the overall needs of a magician.

The package has a target audience of eight to 12 year olds and sits very well at that level. Two things help towards this, firstly Jay Alexander was performing tricks himself at this age and knows what it's like to be trying these things and secondly his zany style helps put you at ease without detracting from the lessons.

Lessons are taught from video clips. On slower machines you may well find these a little jerky and less clear than they perhaps could be. On the bright side the accompanying instructions are clear and precise and there isn't anything here that you shouldn't be able to pick up with a little practice. It's also fair to say that there are a number of times where children at the lower end of the age range may become frustrated by their initial lack of success.

Learn The Art Of Magic comes with it's own set of props, though there is definitely a quality problem here. Cheap is one word that springs to mind, nasty is another. Of the four props included, we managed to break two within seconds of opening the box.

The tricks themselves are taught in modular form. Tricks that can be performed with the included set make

up one section, card tricks have their own area, rope tricks likewise, with five sections included in total.

The history of magic is covered in some depth with biographies of eight great magicians, most from earlier this century. Needless to say Jay Alexander's career is covered, but Paul Daniels seems to be missing (shame - Ed.).

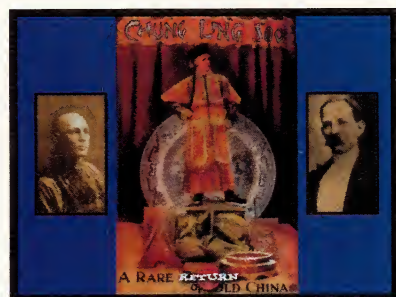
Another section that works towards the completeness of the magician is Magic Slang. The section is a glossary of terms and explanations of the things that make magic what it is. Set-up, switch; terms that allow the newly taught conjurer to sound as professional as possible.

If you want to shatter your children's dreams about magic and illusion then this is the package I would choose to do it with.

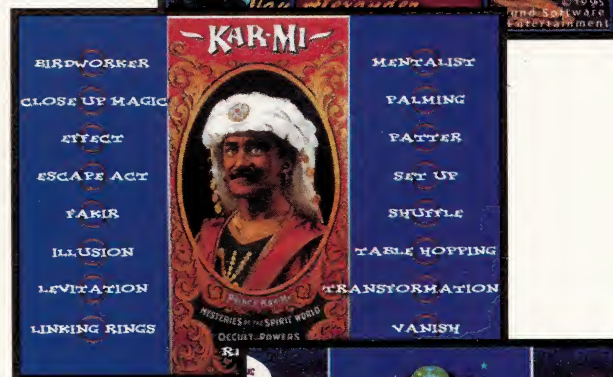
At the end of this your child should be able to display his certificate with pride and go on to who knows where. Watch out Paul Daniels!



▲ The course covers a number of peripheral aspects to magic as well as tricks



► The backgrounds give the package an old world feel that focuses on magic's golden past



▲ A glossary of terms is provided for better understanding of the art



▲ The tricks are taught in five modules



▲ A certificate can be printed off at the end of the course

cdrom

► **Where to get it:**
Learn The Art Of Magic with Jay Alexander is available from Broderbund Software on 01753 620909 for around £30.00

► **What you'll need:**
386DX 33Hz, double speed CD-ROM, 4Mb RAM, soundcard

► **Features** 78%
A good introduction to magic that's precisely taught only let down by the quality of the props

► **Ease of Use** 75%
Simple click and point interface makes the product easily accessible to young users

► **Graphics & Sound** 72%
The video clips are a bit small for total clarity at times, sound no problems

► **Overall** 76%
A well presented package that should give hours of entertainment both on and off screen

◀ One of the sections looks at the careers of magicians old and new

Kids have all the fun, but do they get the best software? Check out the latest releases

Edutainment Roundup

The Adventures of Hyperman

IBM isn't exactly renowned for its multimedia software. So *Hyperman*, as one of the first titles available from its edutainment range, is attracting a lot of attention. The big box contains one CD-ROM, a set of nine trading cards featuring the characters from the program, a puzzle book with lots to do and a *Hyperman* PDA, a magnifier glass-cum-red light filter. During the introduction our cartoon hero *Hyperman* appears to resemble Hong Kong Phooey meets Bananaman - a superhero with the brains of a whelk.

His misadventures have a point, to teach the basics of science. His physically inferior sidekick, Emma C Squared, is the brains of the outfit and on the opposite side of the fence we have Entrobe and Kidd Chaos, evil doers and all round rotters supreme. Their current plan is to pollute the atmosphere by pumping it full of methane, produced by feeding whole herds of cattle into a bizarre methane producing machine.

Alerted by his own *Hyperman* PDA, our bumbling hero is soon flying to the rescue in his Cowmaflage (sic). Using the principles of ballistics he flies into the fortress where the gaseous bovine plot is being hatched. When *Hyperman* inevitably ends up in trouble, Emma will lead him away to the blackboard where the elementary physics get explained.

Aside from the cartoon action there are scientific instruments kids can play with from the gruesome microscope where insects and fibres get the close up treatment. The PDA toy can be used to interact with the program at certain points, revealing secrets about the software.

Hyperman is a very American production, but despite this, his hopeless style will probably appeal to most kids. On the other hand, most of the seven year-olds and above who the program is aimed at will want to see some terrible disaster befall the very square Miss. Squared.



The interface is fairly easy to use and many locations are quite big, requiring you to scroll from one side to the other. A hand shaped cursor points out exits and objects of interest. One problem is that you can't go to some locations until the right time, something that children will find frustrating.

Hyperman is a fun piece of educational software with a brash cartoon style that children will feel comfortable with. The lessons learnt are very much for the classroom, how many times a day do you apply ballistic principles?



Where to get it:

The Adventures of Hyperman is for children aged seven and up, it is available from IBM on 0345 727272 and the price is to be advised

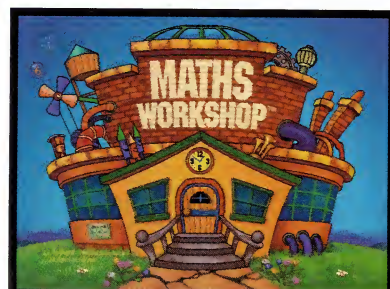
What you'll need:

486 Processor, 4Mb RAM (8Mb recommended), double speed CD and Windows 3.1

Rating

He's Hyper and he's here. Hyperman is entertaining and makes scientific principles a lot of fun. Kids will like the funny characters and should learn something from their exploits.

81%



Maths Workshop

Why wasn't maths as fun as this when I was young? *Maths Workshop* is part of the Active Minds Series and combines bright graphics, well drawn cartoon characters with lots of maths basics. The eight main areas are accessed from the control room which appears on loading, it is here that Poly welcomes you to the workshop.

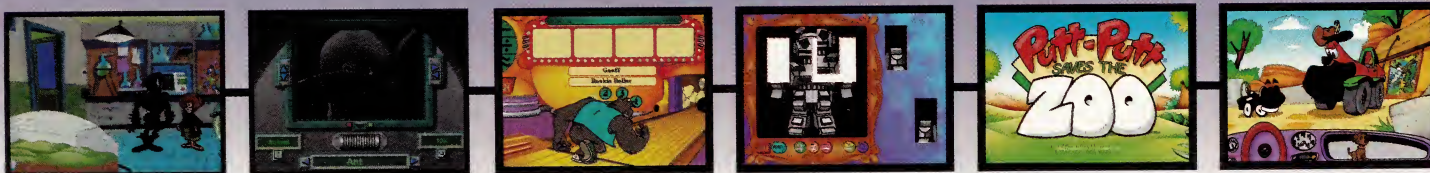
Players can enter their names so that scores can be recorded and information kept over the game's lifespan. A help button is also present should you need some assistance. Parental preferences can also be accessed from here by the hopefully kid proof method using the control key at a certain point.

The most eye catching door leads to a bowling alley where Gus Gorilla is waiting to play. The games here are all based on arithmetic, equivalence and estimation. A sum and four possible answers appear on the board, get one right and a pin appears at the bottom of the alley, get nine right and Gus gets to perform one of his spectacular strikes. The scores are tallied and go in the high score chart which can be printed out.

Another fun area is the puzzle patterns screen, nine jigsaws are waiting to be solved, the difficulty level can be changed to make them more complex. Each piece can be moved around the board and rotated through ninety degrees. When a puzzle is complete the characters in it will animate and perform a reward.

Similarly, the television game uses





reconstructing shapes to reward with video clips.

Rockets is one of the more cerebral games where the child can play against the computer or against another person. The object of the game is to launch the last rocket. Poly gives a maximum number to be launched in any one round and the child must make sure that they get to use the fire the last rocket.

All these and the other games are great fun and will no doubt keep kids enthralled for ages. The maths games will certainly be beneficial to a child's education and the others improve the more subtle skills like problem solving and shape recognition. The manual includes parents pages which tell them what the child is learning and what they can do to help out and improve the child's skills. All the characters are very inviting and everywhere you'll find neat, animated touches.

Maths Workshop is one of the more charming edutainment products that are excellent fun and educational.



► Where to get it:

Maths Workshop is for children 6 and up, it is available from Broderbund on 01753 620909 and costs £29.99

► What you'll need:

386 Processor and 4Mb RAM (486 & 8Mb recommended), CD-ROM Drive, 4Mb hard disk space and Windows 3.1

► Rating

A great collection of maths and shapes puzzles and games that children will enjoy and learn from creator, just lacking the depth of a modern graphics engine

87%



Putt-Putt Saves The Zoo

Putt-Putt is the hero of a series of CD-ROM adventures. In this episode the roving auto gets to go to the zoo and his adventures are told in this animated story. The package comes with a colouring and puzzle book, four crayons and a page of stickers. The CD-ROM installs and, after spending a few minutes examining your system, is ready for the children to play with.

The animated introduction takes *Putt-Putt* from his house into Cartown, picking up Pep, a happy puppy, on the way. The graphics are quite striking and as *Putt-Putt* makes his way to the zoo to deliver some Zoo-chow, children can click on practically every area of the background for an animated snippet, ranging from dancing vegetables to falling fruit or wriggly worms.

Putt-Putt's inventory are displayed on the dashboard, the radio and speedometer are both hotspots and the ignition key acts as the quit button.

Once in the zoo, *Putt-Putt* meets Outback Al, an antipodean monster truck with a problem, six of the baby animals are missing and must be found in time for the opening of the zoo. There are plenty of places to explore, Arcticland and Jungleland are two of the first places you'll come across. Each one is full of simple but entertaining problems and obstacles that must be overcome. Each of the missing animals must be rescued by solving a puzzle. The puzzles are all fun and teach basic skills like shape



matching.

Putt-Putt is more like a traditional adventure than the page-turning book format. A large cursor on the screen shows where he can go. Other automotive characters like Patty Wagon are in the game to talk to and interact with while the real stars are the zoo animals.

Very young children will be quite happy watching the proceedings and getting involved gradually while older kids will enjoy playing games like ice hockey with the polar bears and performing death defying leaps over the alligators. The dancing penguins and joking toucans also make a great spectacle.

This program is full of some of the brightest graphics and animation around. The sound is also excellent, with good music and spot effects.

Putt-Putt is so much game and exploration that children will have fun and not realise that they are being educated. It is certainly bright and breezy in the sound and vision departments and will keep children entertained for ages.



► Where to get it:

Putt-Putt Saves The Zoo is for children aged 3 to 8, it is available from Electronic Arts on 01753 549442 and costs £39.99

► What you'll need:

33Mhz 486 8Mb RAM, double speed CD-ROM Drive, Windows 3.1 or Windows 95

► Rating

A colourful and fun adventure with lots to do for the younger members of the family. *Putt-Putt* is an excellent character and his automotive and animal friends will appeal to kids. The adventure

84%





Phantasmagoria

but doesn't come close. The video is over-long in places and of dubious quality. Add to this the main character's inordinate ability to do something totally irrelevant to the play like having a drink of water, and you begin to realise how far off the mark *Phantasmagoria* really is.

When the first press releases arrived regarding *Phantasmagoria*, it looked like it might break the mould set by previous graphic adventures – basically, nice graphics, shame about the gameplay. Has it succeeded? Read on and I'll reveal all.

Phantasmagoria is a very simple plot revolving around a novelist called Adrienne and her husband who move into an old house, where things begin to happen. The house is holding a dark secret, but can you discover it and save the day? Original, eh?

As you progress through the video sequences, it becomes apparent that all is not as it seems and something is not quite right. Deeper delving reveals a dark secret.

The biggest problem with this kind of adventure is telling the story without boring the player and, so far, no-one had succeeded.

Phantasmagoria is a brave attempt.


Moving around is easy. Everything is highlighted, so when you enter a room, it's a simple matter of moving the mouse over everything to find out what has to be done. The challenge, therefore, is not to solve the puzzle, but how accurate and thorough you can be. Everything is linear, so you must complete tasks in order. This can involve a lot of wandering around - reminiscent of *Police Quest IV*. Disappointingly, there is no map, so you can't jump from one location to another. The puzzles themselves would only be difficult if you were a lobotomised chimp with a vision defect. Considering that the game is supplied on seven CDs, it is remarkably quick to complete. In fact,

with the video sequences turned off, the whole game can be finished in around five or six hours.

Presentation is good and a lot of time and effort in the making is evident. There is more interaction than you would expect in a game of this type and the BBFC 18 rating is added hype.

This is really just a schlock-horror 'B' movie with some tomato sauce thrown around for effect. There's not that much blood and guts and the hole package fails to impress. I would recommend looking elsewhere for a good graphic adventure - maybe *Sam & Max Hit The Road* or *Full Throttle*. Neither are as violent or contain video, but they are eminently more playable.












cd•rom

USER

For Ages - Four Ages - Five Ages - Eight Years - Ten Years

3-10 11-14 15-17 18+

ESPA

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► **Where to get it:**
Phantasmagoria is available on seven CDs from Sierra on 01734 303322 and costs £49.99

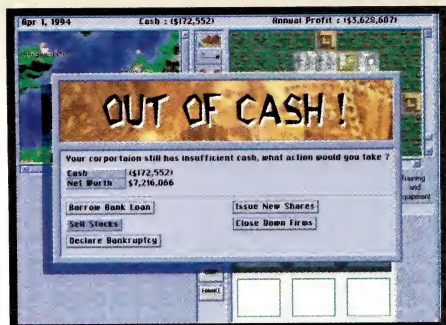
► **What you'll need:**
486DX processor, SVGA graphics, 8Mb RAM, 5Mb hard disk space, SoundBlaster or compatible soundcard

► **Gameplay** **59%**
Nothing special and the puzzles are insultingly easy

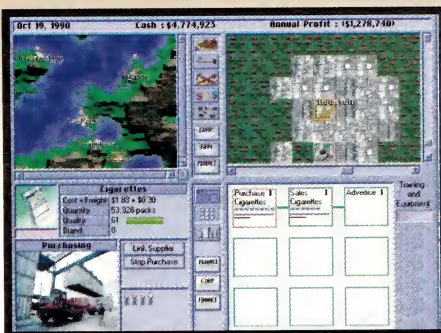
► **Graphics** **69%**
Reasonable at times,ropy at others. Lots of video of varying quality

► **Sound** **67%**
Sometimes atmospheric, but mostly annoying

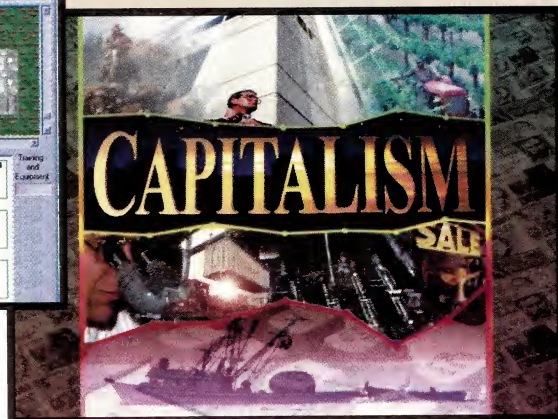
► **Overall** **63%**
Fails to excite and capture the imagination. A great shame as the principles are good



▲ This is not a good sign!



▲ Our first branch in Houston has just got going. Time to get the advertisers to give our product a boost



▲ You make multi-million dollar decisions, you decide who's in the 'in' crowd and the government bends over backwards for your patronage, but are you a happy chap?

Have you got what it takes to become a self-styled fat cat? Geoff Spick tries his luck at corporate construction with Interactive Magic's first release.

Capitalism

Two years after leaving Microprose, Bill Stealey is back with his new outfit, Interactive Magic. The name may have changed but the titles have the same feel. First off the Magic launchpad is *Capitalism*, a game of high finance written by Hong Kong programmers Enlight Software.

Every feature in *Capitalism* is customisable and your first few decisions are quite simple - create a company name, choose a logo, company colour and a face to launch your company. You must set up a headquarters somewhere in the game world, a fantasy creation littered with real city names.

The impressive narrated on-line help will guide you through the first

business steps which you can then recreate for real when you're feeling more confident. Having created a company, you can set up a business; a department store is a recommended place to begin.

Firstly, you'll have to find somewhere to build this Mecca to shopping, but remember, the more desirable the location, the more it will cost to build.

"The ultimate aim of Capitalism is to get your name in the list of top 100 billionaires."

When it's constructed you have nine empty department areas. Purchasing and Sales departments will enable you to buy in products and sell it from your stores. Try visiting the ports on a coastal city and you'll find a large range of products.

Next, employ an advertising agency to promote your product and watch sales rise. You can accelerate time to

get an idea of how you're doing.

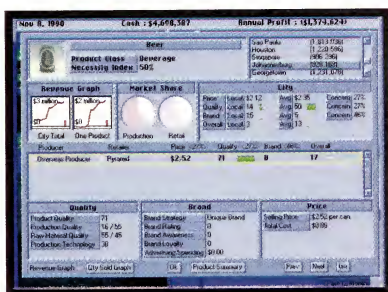
As well as retailing, you can buy raw materials and create your own products to sell. You can buy shares in them and vice versa. If you build up a controlling stock in any company then you can initiate a take-over bid and add it to your fold.

No simple task you may think, but *Capitalism* makes this ferocious challenge possible with a streamlined interface and plenty of on-line help.

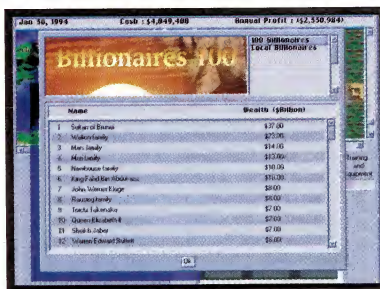
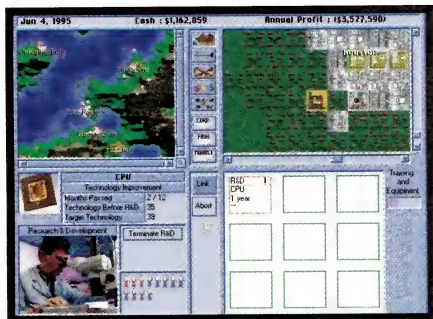
The ultimate aim of *Capitalism* is to get your name in the list of top 100 billionaires.

Capitalism will no doubt appeal to gamers heavily into construction type games. Patience, planning and thoughtfulness are prime requisites.

► This is where we get down to the gritty details, if you understand all these charts then you're a better financier than me



◀ Research and development is the key to further success, here we're planning on taking on the likes of Intel



▼ The ultimate aim is to get your name in this along with the likes of Murdoch, The Queen and a certain Mr Gates of Seattle

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► Where to get it:

Capitalism is available from Interactive Magic on 01276 62462 and costs £39.99

► What you'll need:

386DX-33 processor, 4Mb RAM (8Mb recommended), DOS 5.0 or higher, SVGA graphics

► Gameplay

85% Lots and lots for you to do. Creating, investing, re-organising and making those big corporate decisions is a time consuming task

► Graphics

82% A pleasant and effective interface that shows a lot of information, maybe a little too much

► Sound

77% Limited by the nature of the game, the MIDI music by Fat Man is excellent although you'll want to turn it off after a few hours

► Overall

83% A cracking financial sim with abyssal depths. The difficulty level is extremely customisable, so anyone can find a level to suit themselves



▲ So you think Arnie is hard, that Sly is a tough guy. Well we've got news for you, there's a new worm in town and he's packing a mighty big punch



▲ Behind every blade of grass lurks a worm with a chain gun and a degree from the School of Being Very Hard



▲ Welcome to Hell, lets play Spot the Target. Note the mine to the left of Pig, the possibility of a double hit is very much on if we can blow that worm high enough

Worms

The hardest annelids on the planet are knocking on your monitor. What do you do? Geoff Spick lights the dynamite and smiles his special smile



Welcome to the world of *Worms*, a world of cute little wrigglers, heavy artillery and silly voices. The sight of little worms carrying bazookas and hand grenades has met with wide acclaim and now they're finally on the loose.

If you've been living under a rock for the last year you may not know that *Worms* is a game of armed combat between up to four platoons of worms. These can be controlled by human players or the computer itself - the more players with a pulse the better is the general rule.

You can being the fun almost instantly, the game is simple enough that the manual is hardly required, and there's no complex setup, although the game is highly customisable. To get the most out of *Worms* you can give your little wrigglers names, making combat that much more personal. Any game can be changed to suit the players. There are various rules that can be imposed, like not having airstrikes in

the first round and banzai mode that makes all explosions the equivalent of neutron bombs.

"Special weapons make an appearance in the form of the minigun, banana bomb and that most fearsome weapon of war, the sheep."

To play a basic game you simply choose the sides that are to take part, select league mode or straight contest and pick a landscape you like the look of. Each worm is randomly placed upon one of 10 landscapes with stylish parallax backgrounds, ranging from the pristine slippery ice of the Arctic to an odd alien world with low gravity. There are over four and a half billion different possible levels thanks to the game's level generation system. When all is ready, a large

arrow points over the worm that is first to move, the player who controls it can then delight in wriggling and jumping around the scrolling world looking for an enemy worm to obliterate.

The combat is turn based, so teams get equal opportunities to make fried worm specials. A worm dies by falling into the sea, being blown off the edge of the world or by losing all its energy. This means that a worm starting the game in a precarious position may have a very short lifespan.

Worms can be obliterated by a huge variety of weapons. The important factor in deciding what weapon to use is the remaining health of the target. A worm on the verge of death isn't worth wasting dynamite on when a punch will do, but always remember that when a worm dies he does a little explosive death ritual that might damage your worm, too.

For short range combat the Uzi and shotgun provide a method of line-of-sight attack - the shotgun gives you two shots at an opponent while the Uzi fires a stream of bullets that makes holes in the ground as well as the opposition. If your own worm is caught in the blast and loses even a single energy point from any weapon then the turn is over.

For long range combat there is the basic bazooka, grenades and cluster bombs. Each can be fired a

- 1 Bazooka
- 2 Homing Missile
- 3 Grenade
- 4 Cluster Bomb
- 5 Shotgun
- 6 Uzi
- 7 Fire Punch
- 8 Dragon Ball
- 9 Dynamite
- 10 Mine
- 11 Airstrike
- 12 Teleport

Things that go **BANG** in the night





▲ The cluster bomb settings can be changed for better effects, it looks like the target wormie might just get away with medium injuries

reasonable distance, but your judgement as to arc and power can be undone by the winds that gust at inopportune times. The bazooka and grenade use a single explosive hit while the cluster bomb will split up into bomblets and cause havoc across a wider range. The homing missile is a different beast in that you can pick an exact target for it to head toward. You still have to get arc and power levels right otherwise the missile might fall short of its target.

Special weapons make an appearance in the form of the minigun, banana bomb and that most fearsome weapon of war, the sheep. These drop down in weapons crates at random intervals in the game along with recharges for your existing weapons. Some of the weapons have infinite rounds while others are very limited. The battery of weapons applies across the whole platoon of worms, so you won't lose a specific weapon if one of your wormies bites the bullet.

All this violence wouldn't be so much fun without some sneaky defensive elements. These are provided by the various utility icons. For example a worm in an exposed or remote spot can teleport, Star Trek style, to a safer or better position.

If you're after a well hidden worm then you can blowtorch or drill your way through the solid rock. The scenery won't collapse around your worm-like ears when you dig. The ninja rope and bungee jump are rather more dynamic ways of getting around the game, swing from place to place with the agility of Tarzan, making sure you don't fly off into oblivion. Finally, long girders can be placed, enabling your worms to get to otherwise unreachable areas.

If a worm finds itself in an impossible position it can take the kamikaze option, whereby it dons a

▼ Here is the jungle, or what's left of it after much pounding. Two teamworms are just about to fall prey to a well aimed homing missile



▼ A slight hitch in my master plan. Old wormie here was supposed to bounce up and get the crates on the left. But now there is nowhere to go but down



► Three perfectly healthy worms, two of which are the easiest targets since Archduke Ferdinand and what a splendid choice of weapons to use on them

little bandanna and blasts across the screen before exploding. While all this is going on the brilliantly animated Worms will respond to every move with an encouraging word or give a scolding when you hit one of your own team.

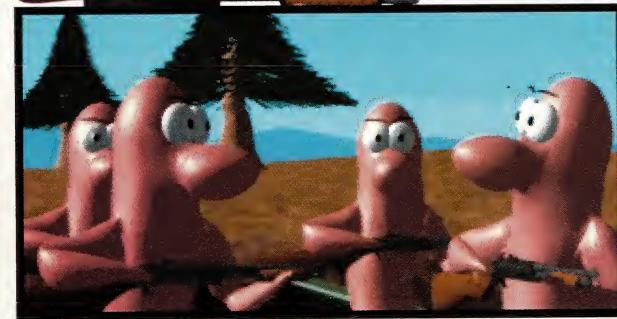
If all this sounds good in theory, you can rest assured that the game plays even better. Laugh as you wipe out your best friend's hardest worm; Cry as you hurl a grenade at maximum strength, watch it bounce off a cliff face and lands back where it started.

When the computer is involved, each of its worms has a different level of intelligence. Some were born stupid and may teleport themselves into open space over the ocean or in a really vulnerable position that ends their little life very quickly, while others are highly accurate and overly furnished in the cunning department.

Worms is so playable that it doesn't really need the 10 rendered cut scenes and it definitely doesn't need a Pentium. Because every game will be different you are unlikely to get bored of. It is simply too much fun, so go and buy it!



▼ Right worms, listen up, first of all I give you stupid names and then I expect you to fight bravely before dying in a blaze of high explosive



▲ Airstrike! For wide spread devastation there is nothing better - and hiding under an alien vegetable isn't going to save you



▲ With a suitable Tarzan cry, wormie flies through the air with the help of a huge alien telescope, look out for mine wormie

cdrom
USER

► Where to get it:

Worms is available from Team 17 on 01924 385903 for £39.99

► What you'll need:

386 processor and 4Mb RAM (486 and 8Mb recommended) Mouse and soundcard

► Gameplay

97%

One of the most fun and addictive games to appear in a long time

► Graphics

88%

Simple and superbly animated, although 10 kinds of landscape seems on the low side

► Sound

91%

Every little worm saying is brilliant, especially "Traitor!" and the effects and music are fine

► Overall

93%

Worms is the game that everyone else will be playing over Christmas, so do yourself a favour and join in the fun, otherwise you'll be very, very lonely!





► Approaching a station on a forbidding world. What adventures lie beyond? Why do all these missions take place on forbidding worlds?

◀ More death and destruction out in the fields. Note the piles of information that litter the right side of the screen



The space marines are back, fighting for justice and inter-galactic harmony, led in their quest by the fearless *Geoff Spick*.

Breach 3

As humans colonised the galaxy, various factions formed with their own interests at heart. They are once again at each others throats in the midst of alien conflicts in this, the latest in the popular *Breach* series.

In this divided galaxy, it is your job to lead your team of Federated Worlds Special Forces in a series of military campaigns. Before you start a game you must create a squad leader who'll lead the marines in the actual missions. Choose a face for your hero from a choice of ugly ducklings and away you go. If you haven't experienced a *Breach* game before, then a training mission will get you used to handling the troops, their weapons and equipment.

Before embarking on a mission you can select which marines will take part in the landing and choose their equipment. Each has various strengths and weaknesses that need to be taken into account. Campaign scenarios are set on land, aboard spacecraft and inside enemy facilities. How you proceed in any situation is entirely up to you. Do you want the squad to charge forward as a whole or in small units offering supportive fire? Each level is blacked out and only cautious exploration will reveal the location of your targets within the darkness. Each mission has a list of objectives which must be completed, which can be viewed at any time.

But remember, your troops are only human and may crack under the pressure of combat. Control is best handled with the mouse - the right button changes through your three icons, move, fire and identify and the left button tells the troops to perform

an action. The action window takes up about two thirds of the screen. The rest is filled with the marine's health stats, order icons and inventory lists.

Combat usually consists of short exchanges between your team and enemy troops, robots or aliens with decent spot effects as your troops use their radios and weapons. Combat can be left to computer control, but you can pause and take over at any time.

As with *Breach 2*, *Breach 3* also comes with a campaign creator where you can build your own scenarios to tackle or give to friends. The creator is a powerful but reasonably simple piece of software to use and when you get bored of the supplied 10 campaigns you can create your own

unique challenges.

Breach 3 also uses the Interlocking Game System to connect with other combat titles like *Rules of Engagement 2*.

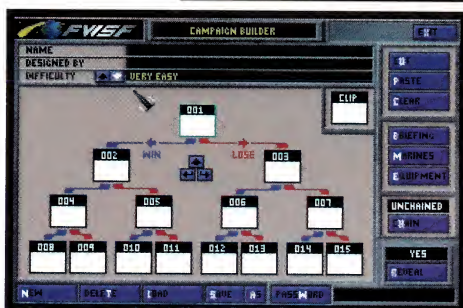
Ultimately, *Breach 3* clings very much to the coat tails of its predecessors with little advancement. It feels very much like an old-style game and fans of the series will no doubt enjoy it. With the different level settings and campaigns, there is lots of gaming to be enjoyed. The rest of us, however, are used to bigger and better things.

◀ ◀ Your team's first mission is to destroy a communications console and wipe out the enemy

▼ This is a data console, in all likelihood you are going to have to hack into it and steal data or blow it to smithereens



► Create your squad and arm them to the teeth with big guns, in a manner similar to the movie *Split Second* with *Rutger Hauer*



◀ The campaign and mission creator uses tables and trees to make construction easy

cd-rom USER

► **Where to get it:**
Breach 3 is available from Sierra on 01734 303322 and costs £19.99

► **What you'll need:**
386 Processor, 4Mb RAM, CD-ROM drive, Mouse and 7Mb Hard disk space

► **Gameplay** 81%
Although initially confusing with a very busy interface, *Breach 3* becomes quite an easy game to play

► **Graphics** 65%
Effective, but rather primitive compared to the likes of *UFO* and *Command and Conquer*

► **Sound** 70%
The sound effects are all very Buck Rogers - they do the job but don't stand out

► **Overall** 73%
A game that will please fans of the series. It offers plenty of combat and exploration although the presentation is showing its age

For Ages 3-10: 3-10
For Ages 11-14: 11-14
For Ages 15-17: 15-17
For Ages 18+: 18+

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Paparazzi: tales of Tinseltown

Get in the gutter with John Dolan, your sleazy photo-guide to the world of the stars

When Royalty farts, they're there. When a star falls, they're snapping away. And now it's your turn to join the tabloid rat race and get the soaraway photos that will make your name and fortune. *Paparazzi* takes you to a pseudo-Hollywood where the work is down and dirty and the only good hack is a dead one.

"And that's really all there is to Papparazzi; view the video clips, visit a location, take photos and try and sell them."

Paparazzi starts with six faces displayed on the menu screen, each has a different attitude to their job. Choose one and you begin the game staring at your Palminator electronic organiser on a quiet Saturday night. View your videophone messages and you'll find that your agent has nothing for you to do, but a tip from a 'friend' leads you to a dark alley where you

▼ **The whole of Tinseltown consists of just a dozen or so locations, quite a shame**



► **With the guide you can find out who's who and who's not even human**

must get some snaps of a dubious guns-for-jellybeans arms deal.

To get to the alley, you click on the map and choose the alley, watch the dirty deeds through your lens, get your two photos and scarper before you're pumped full of high velocity jellybeans. If you get away from the evil-doers, then you can sell your pictures and make some dosh. If the pictures are no good, then it was a wasted effort. Other photographic quests involving catching stars in intimate or unfortunate moments.

You can also get tips from the television where the various channels keep an eye on all the top celebs. If you're not sure about a certain character, then you can look them up in the Who's Who guide.

And that's really all there is to *Paparazzi*; view the video clips, go to a location, take some photos and try and sell them.

What does set this aside from all the FMV laden Windows games is a sense of humour that is part Pulp Fiction, part Saturday Night Live. What this means to the average reader is juvenile, satirical humour of the lowest order that will fall flat on the average British comedy palette. If you can recognise most of the American references then you may well enjoy this bizarre collection of video clips loosely tied into a pretty lame game. *Paparazzi* also contains adult references and lots of bleeped out swearing from rock band, Sucking Chest Wound.

What makes *Paparazzi* so annoying is that you have to take your prize-



▲ **It's Sucking Chest Wound. They Suck! They're loud! They swear a lot! They vomit! It's rock 'n' roll the way Geoff Spick likes it**

▲ **Out on the streets, looking for a story. All we find is this character with underwear on his head**

winning photos at exactly the right moment, fail to do so and you don't get any money. Add to this the linearity of the game and you don't have a particularly enthralling game, though *Paparazzi* is a lot of fun to watch.



▲ **This is what happens to snappers who aren't fast enough on their feet...splat**

cd·rom USER

► **Where to get it:**
Paparazzi is available from Activision on 0181 742 9400 and costs £39.99

► **What you'll need:**
486DX/33 minimum, 8Mb of RAM, double speed CD-ROM, 16-bit sound and Windows 3.1

► **Gameplay** 55%
Limited; look out for clues, pick a location, watch some video and take some photos

► **Graphics** 80%
The interface looks very smart and the video runs smoothly with some neat effects

► **Sound** 75%
Most of the effects are silly sounds made by obviously mad humans, brilliant - if you like that sort of thing

► **Overall** 65%
An original idea that is, unfortunately, only worth getting if you like American satire. Worth a look, but the long-term value is limited

ESPA 3-10 11-14 15-17 18+
For Ages - Four Ages - Four Ages - Four Ages - Four Ages
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► Full on warfare as, head to head, two titans clash. There are plenty of fearsome encounters to be had in Hexen



▲ Note the intricate styling of those windows, imagine the craftwork that went into their construction. See that mace?



◀ Be gone foul fire breathing fiend. These guys are hard to hit and can do a lot of damage with their foul breath

Hexen

The Hex is with you in a puzzling world of monsters and wizards. Geoff Spick storms into the mist to do battle.

ham fisted monster who could splat him. The cleric minces around somewhere between these two extremes, but his all-round skills make up for this.

"In Hexen there are fragile bits of scenery which can be hacked away; smashing stained glass windows is quite impressive."

A rather worrying departure from Hexen's predecessor is the limit of four weapons per character with the final weapon being constructed from three artefacts that are found lurking in the game. Once in the game you'll find a few other innovations. For a start doors open inwards and outwards, fragile bits of scenery can be hacked away; smashing stained glass windows is quite impressive, and trees no longer form an impenetrable barrier.

Yet another new feature is the introduction of magic points scattered throughout the game, pick up these green and blue magic vials and counters in the centre of your status

panel fill up. These counters fuel your magical weapons and make killing easier, but run out of power and your enchanted staff will fire puffs of ineffective magic at the monsters. Also new are the portals that let you travel backwards and forwards between levels, a neat and important innovation.

The action in *Hexen* is a big improvement on the slightly limp *Heretic* and is probably tougher than every other Doom-type game, except maybe *Doom 2*. Its 30 levels of zealous violence make for a brutal challenge.

The only problem encountered when playing *Hexen* is that the game is really dark, even with the gamma correction cranked up things look decidedly dingy and some levels are decidedly headache inducing. This aside, the action involves lots of narrow ledges, huge drops and the traditional key and hidden button style of adventuring.

Hexen will definitely appeal to die-hard *Doom* fans, even people getting a little bored of the genre will find that the innovations add a lot to the game. Ultimately though, *Hexen* is the last in the line and showing its age, and with *Quake* just around the corner, its life span looks very limited.



▲ Handy things wizards, there's your opponent miles out of striking range and you can incinerate him without so much as damaging a finger nail

▼ My what big horns you have. This Silurian beast looks like it might put up more of a fight than the deceased guards

Hexen is the latest, and probably the last, variant of the *Doom* engine before everyone rushes off into *Quake* and *Duke Nukem 3D* territory. So what advancements could Raven Software bring over *Heretic*? A game already brimming with post-*Doom* features but rather lacking in wanton violence.

Well for a start there are the role playing features, reminiscent of *Dungeons and Dragons* games. Before you start your quest, you must choose a class of character. There's the all-powerful warrior, the over-hexed mage and the multi-talented cleric who offers the best of both worlds. Each character has four attributes: speed, armour, magic and strength. Each class means a very different game playing style. The warrior can race around at will cracking skulls and generally having a lot of fun while the mage must sneak around corners trying not to get too close to some



▲ This wizard's staff has a death dealing knob on the end, and a nice stack of health potions in his inventory

cd·rom

► **Where to get it:**
Hexen is available from GT Interactive Software on 0171 258 3791 and costs £44.99

► **What you'll need:**
486 processor, 4Mb RAM (8Mb recommended), soundcard, mouse and joystick

► **Gameplay** 81%
More of the same with some novelties thrown in, still gripping and addictive

► **Graphics** 75%
The monster sprites are excellent but the world is very dark and dingy, not pleasant at all

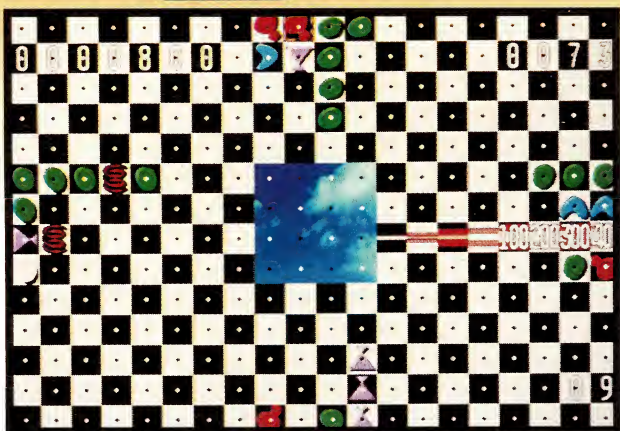
► **Sound** 80%
Great stereo sound, spot effects and some solid music all add to the atmosphere

► **Overall** 80%
A worthy, if slightly expensive, way for the *Doom* generation to bow out, but it's time for something new. Hexen has everything needed for a tough night of questing and blasting

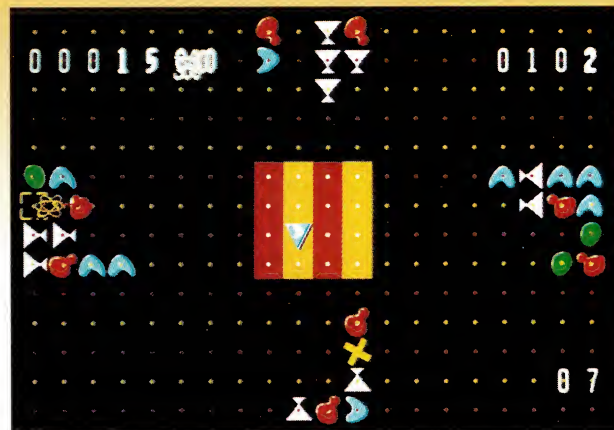
For Ages - Four Ages - Para Ages - F4U, J4U, J4U - For Ages

3-10 11-14 15-17 18+

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◀ Striking like a coiled cobra, Zoop is all about keeping the advancing shapes under control, colour by colour. If you don't, you get the very familiar 'Game Over!'



▲ The strange and crazy world of Zoop where shapes must be destroyed for the benefit of your score

Excuse me? Zoop? Sounds like some kind of evil chemical. What lies behind this strange name? John Dolan investigates.

Zoop

Descriptions for Zoop are wide ranging indeed. Solitaire on steroids and Tetris with guns are just two. At the end of the day, what we have here is one of those games that grows on you in exactly the same addictive way as Tetris did.

Basically Zoop is a game of reaction and quick thinking set on a grid of dots occupying the whole screen. Your on-screen persona, a triangular object, is confined to a smaller central grid, highlighted in a different colour. From the four edges of the screen coloured irregular shapes appear, occupying one square along the outer edge of the grid. As more shapes appear on the same row or column they advance towards the centre. Your job is to shoot and destroy these invading shapes. Simple so far, but you can only shoot shapes of one colour at a time. If there are two or more shapes of the same colour on the same line, a single shot will dispose of them all.

When you hit a shape of another colour, a swap takes place; the shape you just hit becomes the colour of the shapes you were shooting previously and you can now shoot different coloured shapes. Got it? No. Well don't worry, it's easier to play than it sounds.

The first thing that strikes you about Zoop are the vibrant colours it uses for both the game and front end screens. The second thing is the way you start playing a sedate game and end up working up a sweat as you fight to stay alive.

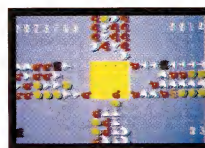
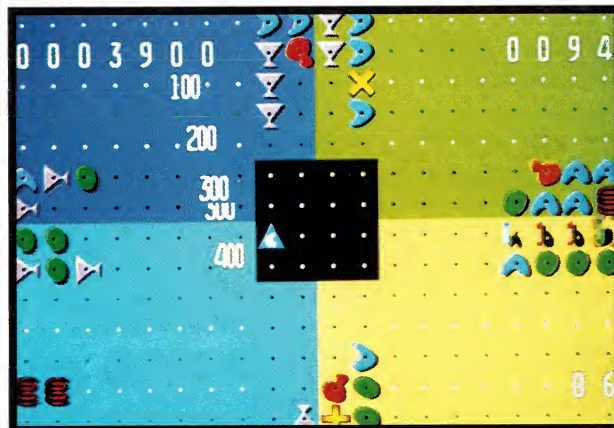
There are two main ways to play Zoop; continual play advances you through the levels without pausing, while level play gives you an increasing number of shapes to hit per level (level play is easier because it clears the screen at the end of each level). In

either mode the game continues to get progressively difficult until, despite your best efforts, the shapes encroach on your area of the board ending the game.

You aren't totally alone in your efforts though, from time to time a bonus shape will appear amongst the target shapes and, if you shoot it, you'll get a beneficial boost. The boosts either wipe out all shapes of one colour on the screen or every shape on one side of the board.

"you start playing a sedate game and end up working up a sweat as you fight to stay alive."

The central aim of Zoop is to achieve the highest score possible. You do this by letting rows of the same colour grow and then take them out with one shot. You get 100 points for the first shape, 200 for the second and so on. Zoop gets harder a lot quicker than other games of this type and it requires some serious skill and co-ordination to advance through.



▲ On the verge of death, no amount of frantic zooping will help me now. Game over, game over

▼ Wow man! The colours. Zoop looks like a migraine waiting to happen. But you're too busy to notice the visual acid trip

The bright interface is easy to navigate and although you can play with either mouse, keyboard or joystick, the keyboard seems by far the most efficient way of playing. The music is okay but may get on your nerves after a while, however you can turn it off from the menu. A small but handy feature of Zoop is that it includes a PIF file and colourful icon so you can launch the game from Windows 3.1.

Zoop borrows from a few game types, but the end product is quite unique. It is one of those games you look forward to a quiet session of after a long hard day. Proof that you don't need fancy graphics to be extremely playable and addictive.

cd·rom
USER

For Ages - Four Ages - Four Ages - Four Ages - Four Ages

3-10 11-14 15-17 18+

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► **Where to get it:**
Zoop is available from Talk Loud on 0171 255 2767 and costs £24.99

► **What you'll need:**
386 PC minimum, MIDI soundcard for music, mouse or joystick optional

► **Gameplay** **89%**
Excellent fun and addictive, it has a steeper difficulty curve than Tetris so the games are shorter

► **Graphics** **75%**
Bright, clear and highly effective, but very repetitive after a while

► **Sound** **70%**
The music is okay but grates after long periods of play, fairly minimal sound effects

► **Overall** **84%**
A fun little game at a fair price. It doesn't quite do enough to be an all time classic, but has strong gameplay

Games Roundup

Countdown

Every weekday, a few million housefolk and students gather around the television to watch Richard Whiteley and Carol Vorderman parade with a guest minor celebrity about a series of nine letters and six numbers. Somehow this is actually quite addictive and now you can join in the fun any time of day with the computer version of *Countdown*.

The game follows the same format of the television show and you can play against another person or the computer.

The letters rounds take up most of a game. The player chooses nine letters from stacks of vowels and consonants. Both players have to use the letters chosen to form the largest word possible. Verified by the Concise Oxford Dictionary, the player forming the largest word scores the points.

In the numbers game you pick six number cards from four upturned rows, the top row contains the high numbers, while the lower rows contain random numbers between one to nine. Finally the conundrum consists of a nine-letter anagram which you must figure out before the computer.

Playing computer *Countdown* is reasonable fun with two players, but against the computer becomes dull very quickly. You can play in either average, good or champ mode, with the computer scoring accordingly. The voices that guide you through the game are not those of Richard and Carol and this will detract from the experience for fans. Not recommended unless you actually laugh at Whiteley's jokes!



Where to get it:

Countdown is available from VCI Software on 01923 255558 and costs £19.99

What you'll need:

286 Processor or higher, CD-ROM Drive, 5Mb hard disk space and soundcard

Rating

A rough and shoddy imitation of the TV programme, but the basic elements are there for fans to enjoy

61%



Rebel Assault

With the sequel to this Star Wars game just around the corner, the original is well placed to attract those who missed it first time around. This version comes with all the fixes that were released to patch up the rather bugged first releases. *Rebel Assault* was one of the very first CD-ROM-only games and is loaded with full screen video, a high quality sound track and impressive visuals.

The game is set around a series of chapters, following your progress through the Rebellion and comprises of four different types of gameplay. Many of the levels are flight based, set around craft from the Star Wars movies. Some levels are viewed from inside the cockpit, others from behind your craft or from high above. The fourth game type is a third person shoot'em-up.

Beginning with training in the canyons of Tatooine, before heading into space to take on the Empire, your character, either male or female, must pass each chapter to progress. In each level you have a damage bar that rises with every hit to your ship.

The video clips are taken straight from the movies and the cut scenes add loads of atmosphere to what is a rather rough and unforgiving gaming experience. Ultimately *Rebel Assault* is a game for Star Wars fans and if it didn't use the magic of George Lucas' galaxy far, far away, it would fail badly. The desire to see the rest of the game will keep you going and the rewards are plenty.



Where to get it:

Rebel Assault is available from Virgin White Label on 0171 368 2255 and costs £12.99

What you'll need:

386 minimum processor, 4Mb RAM, joystick and soundcard recommended

Rating

Showing its age, but the magic of Star Wars and LucasArts never fails to impress

77%



SVGA Harrier

V8B Harrier Assault is based on the US Marine's version of the venerable British built Harrier. The SVGA version improved the graphics of the original, not just in the flight simulation but in the campaign manager which puts you in charge of an entire US Marine Expeditionary Brigade.

In pilot mode you get to fly missions in support of the full marine strategy. Taking off from your aircraft carrier, you'll fly some missions with more than one Harrier. For beginners to the world of the flight simulation, there is a simple flight mode that takes out most of the harrowing aspects of throwing several tons of jet around the sky. Full flight mode simulates the Harrier as best a PC can and requires good control.

Campaign mode puts you in charge of the Tactical Amphibious Warfare Data System which lets you plan missions. From the command centre you will receive messages from ground and air assets. There are 11 control modes for the system and the manual takes a lot of pages to explain it all.

SVGA Harrier certainly looks very nice and the level of detail is excellent. Control of your aircraft is not compromised by the graphical detail. Unfortunately there is no texture mapping and the ground is rather primitive. However the complexity of the mission commander role and the joy of flying this unique aircraft make *SVGA Harrier* a bargain for the simulator enthusiast.



Where to get it:

SVGA Harrier is available from Powerplus on 01276 684959 and costs £14.99

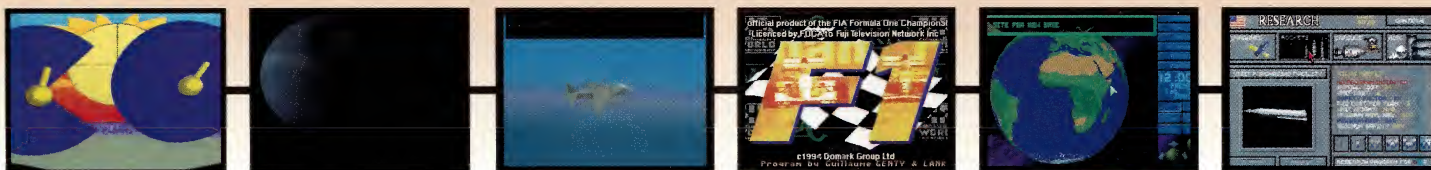
What you'll need:

386 Processor, 486 recommended with 4Mb RAM, SVGA graphics card, joystick recommended

Rating

A superbly detailed flight simulator and mission creator, just lacking the depth of a modern graphics engine

81%



F1

Featuring teams and drivers from the 1993 Formula 1 season, this arcade game takes you around the world in search of motor racing glory. Based on the 16-bit game *Vroom*, you can play either in arcade mode where you must pass a growing number of cars in each race, or world championship mode where you must race for vital points.

Before racing you can set up your car with different wing settings, automatic or manual gears and hard, medium or soft tyres. Each variable affects the handling of your car. You can also select a difficulty level from Novice to Expert.

The graphics are incredibly simplistic, the track bends and dips quite well while objects whizz past at the side of the track to give a feeling of speed.

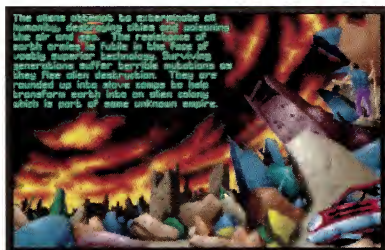
During a race you can make pitstops to change tyres and refuel. The racing does happen incredibly quickly and as your engine screams you have to keep an eye on the road as it turns this way and that. The realism is ludicrous, taking sharp bends at 200mph is stupid and the other cars are usually little more than mobile chicanes.

Two player mode uses a split screen to let you race another person head to head and if you find yourself getting very good you can play in Turbo mode.

F1 is a woefully outdated piece of software and without Murray Walker's brilliantly inept commentary there is little incentive to buy.



For Ages - Pour Ages - Para Años - Für Jahre - Per Anni			
3-10	11-14	15-17	18+
✓	✓	✓	✓
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► Where to get it: <i>F1</i> is available from Powerplus on 01276 684959 and costs £14.99			
► What you'll need: 386 or higher processor, 2Mb RAM, soundcard, mouse or joystick supported			
► Rating		12%	
Simply the worst budget game seen all year, well past its sell by date and not in the least impressive			



UFO: Enemy Unknown

Here's a hint, don't buy this unless you have a hell of a lot of time spare. Quite simply this is one of the most addictive strategy games on the face of the Earth and it can be yours for a very reasonable price.

The plot is simple your special anti-alien task force is being funded by the world's governments and in return you must keep the Earth safe from UFO attacks, outbreaks of panics and concerted attacks.

You do this by building bases around the globe, equipping them with fighter interceptors and troop ships. Combat takes place at two levels, in the air you can take on UFOs with your interceptors and on the ground you can dispatch troops and fight the aliens in hand to claw combat.

What makes *UFO* so brilliant is that you begin the game with little knowledge of the UFOs and you must capture their equipment, do your own research and work out how to defeat them. So while you're playing soldiers, your scientists are beavering away coming up with better weapons and armour for you to use.

Both the base building and combat sections are great fun in their own right but put them together and you have a top game that hardly shows any signs of ageing.

The vast arsenal of weaponry and the different terrain makes combat endless fun while building bases gives you a junior *SimCity* into the bargain.

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3-10	11-14	15-17	18+
✗	✗	✓	✓
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► Where to get it: <i>UFO: Enemy Unknown</i> is available from Powerplus on 01276 684959 and costs £16.99			
► What you'll need: 386 Processor minimum, 4Mb RAM, VGA graphics, soundcard and a mouse			
► Rating		90%	
Still one of the best strategy war games on the PC - ace gameplay, plot and graphics make this unmissable			

Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space

This is one of the more original game concepts of the last few years. Starting at the beginning of the space race, you must help either the Americans or the Russians achieve supremacy of the stars. *Buzz* is very much a two player game with modem and even play by mail options. Two players can play on the same machine or you can play against the computer.

Building a space program involves dealing with both scientists and administration. All these interests are represented on the site by buildings which you click on to get access to the various departments.

To start with you must develop an unmanned flight. Research and buying hardware costs money, so you have to watch your budget, this is more important the harder the difficulty level you picked at the beginning.

As the space race gets going you also have to choose which astronauts go on which missions. On missions with more than one crewperson, compatibility plays an issue such is the detail in the game and arguments can erupt between the crew and effect the outcome.

To judge your success you are scored by prestige rating, the more spectacular a mission, the more your prestige will rise, but embarrassing failures will bring it crashing down. The manual is very helpful giving advice and educational guidance, making this challenging but fun to play.



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3-10	11-14	15-17	18+
✓	✓	✓	✓
(C) 1994. ELSPA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED			
► Where to get it: <i>Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space</i> is available from Virgin on 0171 368 2255 and costs £12.99			
► What you'll need: 386 processor or higher, 4Mb RAM, 6.5Mb hard disk, mouse and soundcard			
► Rating		72%	
An interesting title which gives you a feel for the massive challenge a space program holds			

As the living room and the family PC move closer, along comes the Envision to tie the knot between your TV and the PC.

Geoff Spick does some home work.

Olivetti Envision

► It was only a matter of time before the PC made it into the living room



The principle of Envision is a simple one, a PC housed in a home electronics style casing with ease of use to match your video recorder. A device the whole family could use while offering the latest in multimedia and Internet access. It connects to your TV via a SCART lead but can also use a regular PC monitor.

The Envision comes with a 75Mhz Pentium processor and 8Mb of RAM, a perfectly acceptable specification for today's multimedia environment. A Sound Blaster compatible 16-bit audio card, quad speed CD-ROM, 850Mb hard drive and an MPEG card are also part of a regular multimedia PC these days. The internal 14.4k modem is a little on the slow side these days but still a viable piece of kit and the three PCI expansion slots make it flexible.

All this fancy hardware is nothing without a decent interface and sitting boldly on top of Windows '95 is *Olipilot*, a very friendly way of using the machine without ever seeing a DOS prompt or row of icons.

There are three rooms in *Olipilot*, the living room, the office and the children's room. Inside each you'll find the same basic applications, plus some unique to that room. The picture of a CD player lets you play audio CDs, the TV lets you play video and photo CDs and various other images can be used to define other programs or tasks.

But how do you operate this system with it stuck underneath the television? Envision uses an infra-red remote control keyboard with a thumb controlled track ball in the top right corner. The mouse buttons are replaced by buttons on the corners of the unit. Slightly confusingly, the left button is on the right side, near the trackball. Using the system is very easy – rolling the ball around to move the pointer is very simple and only slightly slower than the traditional mouse.

A separate remote control can be

used to control the CD player for video and audio without needing to have the computer turned on. When you want to use the computer properly, you hit the exit door on *Olipilot* and nip straight into Windows '95. From here everything is just like a normal PC.

The unit has a digital clock on the front and looks like any CD player. Behind a flap you'll find the floppy disk drive and behind another panel are the joystick and audio connection points. On the back are the video, MIDI and power connectors. All the leads are provided and setting up the Envision is no harder than the average television. The manuals are all well written and explain how to get used to the PC in a non-technical manner.

The only problem with the Envision is that Windows looks decidedly blurry on a TV and this combination is not suited to extended office-type work. The keyboard isn't bad but not quite up to desktop standards and the trackball isn't as fast as a regular mouse.

Envision is a bold step into the future, the technology of a well specified PC in the living room that can be used by anyone.



▲ This is how the Envision integrates with a typical front room

▼ The shape of things to come? – remote control and user-friendly



▲ *Olipilot* is designed to take the mystery away from computers for the non-technical. The interface comprises of three rooms, an office, a play room and a living room.

► Where to get it:

The Envision range is available from Olivetti on 0181 785 6666, the model reviewed costs £1899

► Why:

A true family multimedia PC that fits right in the living room

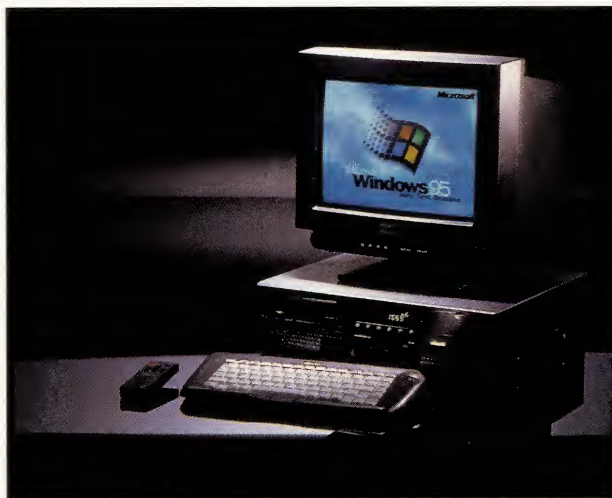
► Why not:

A proper monitor is a necessity if you want to do serious work

► Rating

The shape of the PC is changing, and Envision is the first major step in this direction. You get a good PC, Internet access, a friendly interface and lots of software for all the family

88%



CD-ROM Drive round up

Spinning faster than Damon Hill on a wet track, Geoff Spick examines the latest multimedia essentials to hit the CD-ROM User office.

Panasonic QuadPro

Panasonic's brightly packaged unit comes with drive, audio cable, disk with PowerIDE software and screws. Designed for use with a computer equipped with E-IDE (most modern systems have this), PowerIDE will get better performance from an E-IDE machine, than an older IDE unit.

The quad speed CD-ROM drive can connect onto your existing IDE connector or to a secondary interface which Panasonic sell for around £10.

This Panasonic has an unusual feature, in the form of a dust flap that sits in front of the disc tray. This is pushed down by the tray when the drive is opened and combined with the loading mechanism makes quite a bit of noise. The QuadPro has two buttons, volume up and down to control the audio level.

The PowerIDE software is supposed to boost IDE device performance in

DOS and Windows considerably and works very well, however the installation program kept disagreeing with my system and some manual installation was required. Thankfully there is plenty of instructive text on the disk to help out should you have any problems.

A few DOS utilities come on the floppy, FLOCK stops the eject button working, effectively sealing the drive and FDUNLOCK reverses the process. FDAUDIO brings up a TSR CD player panel.

Performance wise, the QuadPro runs well with a 600kps transfer speed but sits in the shadow of the six speed, especially over longer tasks like large installations. The 240ms access time is standard across most CDs.

The QuadPro meets the MPC-3 standard which should be commonplace next year. Quad speed drives could well be essential for future multimedia titles. The emergence of six and eight speed do make you wonder what drive to buy, but quad speed should be ample for at least two or three years.



► Where to get it:

The Panasonic QuadPro is available from Panasonic on 01344 853913 and costs £165

► Why?:

A well priced CD drive that is part of the MPC 3 standard. The dust flap offers extra protection

► Why not?:

The Aztech is only £10 more, but quad speed prices are falling

► Rating

Quite a solid performing quad speed performer with plenty of software support in the way of utilities, although a little noisy while opening and closing.

85%

Aztech Zeta 6x



Aztech's latest drive comes in a neat little package with four retaining screws, audio connector, a pair of manuals and the driver on a floppy disk. The IDE drive will plug directly into your machine with your second E-IDE connector if you have one spare, otherwise you'll need a secondary connector and cable.

Once installed, the Aztech looks like all other CD drives, although it has a Play and Skip Track button next to stop and eject button on the front panel so you can use audio CDs without needing a specific DOS or Windows program running.

The loading mechanism is very smooth, and the carriage is well designed to be opened manually in case your disc gets stuck inside during a system or power failure. The Aztech is blistering with a seek time of 238ms and real world applications registered it transferring data just

above its listed average of 675. The longer it transfers sequentially the faster transfer becomes, a useful feature for data intensive applications.

The Aztech is an excellent drive and will certainly be a viable multimedia component for a couple of years, if you don't feel like waiting for eight speed drives to become mass market, this is a fine purchase.

► Where to get it:

The Aztech Zeta 6x is available from Aztech on 01734 814121 and costs £175

► Why?:

Very fast CD drive with handy instant audio play facility

► Why not?:

Nothing against it except Aztech will want the review unit back!

► Rating

This drive has enough speed to keep the most demanding applications happy for years - the fact that it is only a few pounds cheaper than a quad speed is cause for celebration

93%

Sony CSD 760MK



If you are buying multimedia capabilities for the first time, then a complete package may be the answer. The CSD comprises a quad speed CD drive, 16 bit stereo soundcard, speakers and all the requisite cables and screws.

The package also comes with two CD-ROM game titles, Guilty and Descent. MediaMaestro, a multimedia creator and Navigator, an installation utility.

The CD drive connects to the soundcard and once everything is installed, the drive proves to be utterly standard, offering 250ms access and 600Kbs transfer rates.

The soundcard is SoundBlaster Pro compatible, which is not part of the MPC-3 standard but can be upgraded

with a separate Wave Blaster card, bringing it up to the required specification.

The speakers are unpowered and quite useless for anything other than use in a quiet room. The well presented manual is one of the better produced installation guides. Overall this is a competent but unspectacular way of joining the multimedia world.

Where to get it:

The CSD-760MK is available Sony on 01932 816000 and costs £325

Why?:

An all-in-one multimedia solution, good for the first timer

Why not?:

Unpowered speakers and a rather old standard of soundcard ruin the overall effect

Rating

Not bad if you aren't a particularly demanding user, but most people will want more. The unpowered speakers are a bit of a let down while everything else is solid equipment

75%

NEC Multispin 4x4c



The trend towards multi-disc games and information systems is creating a demand for CD drives that can cope with this load. So far most systems have had an external loader which you slot the discs into and slot in the deep loading bay.

The 4 X 4 is different because you load the CDs by feeding them individually like floppies into the unit which uses a pinch roller to draw them in. The quad speed drive is capable of switching between any one of the four discs. When you see the unit in action, it is quite impressive. The roller feeds your discs smoothly into the drive and you can switch between loaded discs by using the four on-unit buttons or by

using the disc changer software.

The NEC 4x4 is an excellent bit of kit that is only slightly more expensive than the single disc unit and looks like becoming a popular accessory.

We have two 4x4c drives to give away on page 67

Where to get it:

The NEC Multispin 4x4 IDE is available from NEC on 0181 993 8111 and costs £199.99

Why?:

You can use four discs without the unsightly flaps or disc packs of existing units

Why not?:

It is only a quad speed and the technology is unproven in the marketplace

Rating

Those frantic disc changing days are over, all you have to do is push a button, brilliant! As CDs become too small to cope, a device like this will be a godsend

90%

NEC Multispin 4X-IDE

Turn to page 67 for your chance to win one of five NEC Multispin 4X drives

The Multispin came supplied with a single disk and a manual. As with the Panasonic QuadPro it comes with a dust flap protecting the drive tray, but this unit opens and closes both smoothly and quietly. Installation is a breeze and adding the driver to your CONFIG.SYS is explained. Instead of the usual flat eject button, the Multispin has a rocker button angled out to the right side. Another little feature is a metal bar on the left side of the tray which can be flipped around to make a guard which will hold a CD in place. This allows vertical stacking of your CD drives - the first drive on the market to offer this facility. It does seem to wait for a nagging second before ejecting though.

This is a capable drive with a good name behind it. Whilst tests show it to be slightly slower than the others in our tests, in use, there is no real difference in performance.



Where to get it:

The NEC Multispin 4x-IDE is available from NEC on 0181 993 8111 and costs £129

Why?:

A bargain priced drive with non-disruptive dust flap and capable of being used vertically

Why not?:

A quad speed that tests report as a fraction slower than the others reviewed

Rating

An average unit, with reasonable performance and NEC's reliability behind it. The Multispin 4x-IDE comes in with a competitive price advantage over its rivals.

79%

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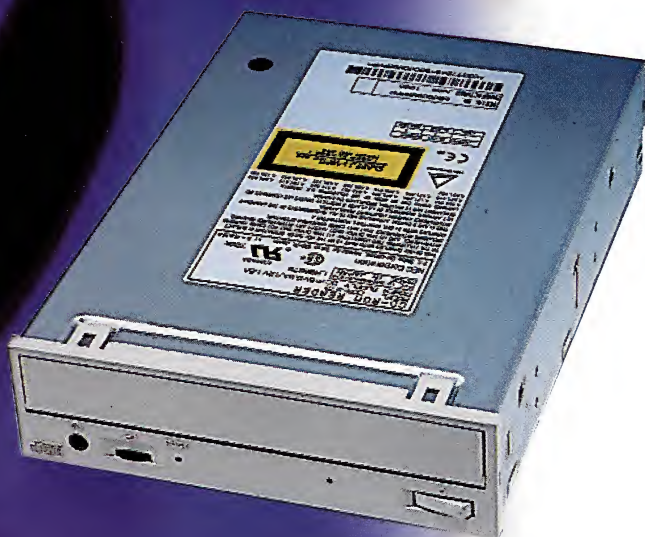
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Get in a *spin* and win a *CD-ROM drive*

Seven
fantastic
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be won!



Begin the new year with a splendid new Multispin CD-ROM Drive by entering *CD-ROM User's* fabulous competition in association with NEC Business Equipment Division. We have over £1,200 worth of their latest CD-ROM drives to give away. The prizes are two of its excellent Multispin 4x4c drives and five Multispin 4X-IDE drives.

The revolutionary Multispin 4x4c uses a four CD jukebox to save you swapping discs with the latest multiple CD titles. Simply feed up to four discs in and switch between them at the push of a button. The quad

speed drive features 250ms access, 600Kbps transfer rates and has a 256K cache. The 4X-IDE has a 128K cache, 200ms access times and 600Kbps transfer rates. A special arm on the disc tray allows it to be used in a vertical drive bay with out the risk of discs falling out.

Both drives use an IDE interface and can usually be plugged directly into your computer, all you need is a spare 5.25inch drive bay with internal data and power connectors. Read the reviews in this issue and then enter this not to be missed competition. For further information on the drives call NEC on 0345 300 103.

Answer these questions:

1 - Quad speed CD-ROM drives have an average transfer rate of?
a. 99Kbps
b. 600Kbps
c. 1995Kbps

2 - CD-ROMs are used in the computer world for?
a. Storing large amounts of data
b. Backing up your hard disk
c. Lunchtime Frisbee contests

3 - What does the acronym IDE stand for?
a. Integrated Drive Electronics
b. Internal Donkey Engine
c. Information Device Enlightenment



Competition Rules

The closing date for entries is the 31st of January. Only single entries will be accepted, multiple entries will be fed to the office dustbin. Winners will be drawn from all correct entries and notified by post. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. There is no cash alternative to the prize on offer. To enter the competition send your answers to

the above questions on a postcard only to:

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CD-ROM User
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BH1 2JS

CD-ROM User

READERS' SURVEY

WIN LOADS of SOFTWARE

Right, so the new-look CD-ROM User has been around for a few months now, so you must have an

opinion or two about how we could make it even better. I bet you could tell us something about the other CD-ROM magazines you have read, too. Why not take five minutes and fill in the CD-ROM User reader survey, and not only get to say what you think of us, but get automatically entered into our excellent competition? The sender of the 50 winning surveys drawn after the closing date (31st December 1995) will receive a goody bag with anything from a single CD title to a whole host of freebies including T-Shirts, mugs and lots more!



Still not sure whether to fill it in or not? Well we've even given you a freepost address so there is no need for a stamp if posted in the UK. Send your completed surveys to the following address: **CD-ROM User Readers' Survey, Paragon Publishing Ltd. Freepost (BH 1255), Bournemouth BH1 2TA.**

Personal Details

1. Your name

2. Your address

3. Are you male ☐ female ☐

4. How old are you?

Under 16
17-21
22-26
27-31
32-40
41-50
51+

5. What is your occupation?

6. If you are a student, what are you studying?

7. How much does your household earn a year?

5-10K
10-15K
16-20K
21-30K
31-40K
41K+

General Information

8. What daily newspapers do you read?

The Sun
The Daily Star
The Guardian
The Times
The Telegraph
The Independent
The Daily Express
The Daily Mail
Today
The Daily Mirror
The Daily Record
Others (please state)

9. What Sunday newspapers do you read?

The Observer
The Sunday Times
The Sunday Express
The Mail on Sunday
The Independent on Sunday
The Sunday Mail
News of the World
The Sunday Mail
Others (please state)

10. What computer magazines do you read, other than CD-ROM User?

CD-ROM Now
CD-ROM Today
CD-ROM Magazine
CD-ROM Games
PC Power
PC Home
PC Format
PC Review
Computer Life
PCW
What PC
Windows User
Windows Plus
Edge

X-Gen ☐
 Internet Today ☐
 NetUser ☐
 .net ☐
 Internet ☐

Others (please state) ☐

10a. Which is your favourite computer magazine and why?

11. What other non-computer magazines do you read?

Empire ☐
 Premiere ☐
 Sky ☐
 GQ ☐
 Loaded ☐
 Q ☐
 Select ☐
 NME ☐
 Melody Maker ☐
 Top Gear ☐
 Wired ☐
 Mojo ☐
 Goal ☐
 Total Football ☐
 Four-four-two ☐
 Encounters ☐
 SFX ☐

Others (please state) ☐

Your Computer

12. Do you own a PC?

Yes ☐ No ☐

13a If yes, is it?

286 ☐ 386 ☐
 486 ☐ Pentium ☐
 Speed _____MHz

13b. If no, are you planning to buy one?

Do you have any of the following (please state type)?

CD-ROM Drive ☐
 Sound card ☐
 Printer ☐
 Modem ☐
 Other add-ons ☐
 Type(s) ☐

14. Where did you buy your PC?

Mail order ☐
 Retail outlet ☐
 Specialist supplier ☐
 Other (please state) ☐

15. Where do you buy your software?

16. Do you use your PC to play music CDs or VideoCD?

Yes ☐
 No ☐

17. What peripherals are you hoping to buy in the next 6-12 months?

18. If you have a modem, what uses do you have for it?

Links with friends ☐
 Local BBS ☐
 Printer ☐
 E-mail ☐
 CIX ☐
 Compuserve ☐
 Internet ☐
 (service provider)..... ☐
 Other (specify) ☐

19. Generally, how do you think we could improve the magazine?

20. Is there any other section you would like to see in the magazine?

21. What products are you looking forward to being released?

22. What is your favourite type of software?

Reference? ☐
 Edutainment? ☐
 Games? ☐
 Infotainment? ☐
 Other (please state) ☐

23. Do you believe you got value for money from this issue of CD-ROM User?

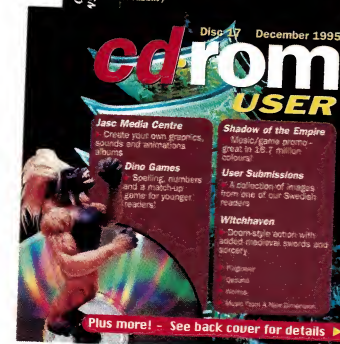
24. What would you like to see on future cover CDs?

Software demos ☐
 Game demos ☐
 Tutorials ☐
 Interviews ☐
 Shareware programs ☐
 Other (please state) ☐

Finally, a tie break question:

25. What is your favourite program and why? (12 words or less, please).

That's all there is to it. Thanks for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. Good luck in the draw.

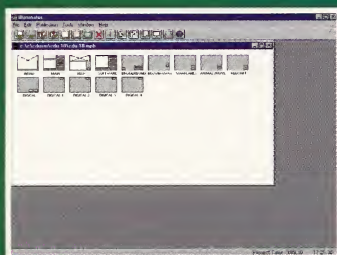
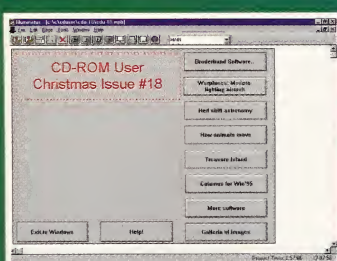




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We've changed the format of the short reviews laid down the sides of the Buyer's Guide this month. Each entry is taken from that page and is highlighted for your convenience. This gives you more detailed information on 10 products each month, building up to become a valuable reference source.

Buyers' Guide



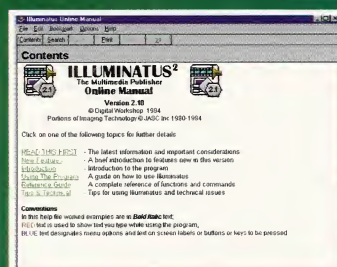
Illuminatus

Publisher Digital Workshop
Tel 01295 258335

• Multimedia has certainly made a huge impact since its arrival on the PC. However, making your own multimedia package was an expensive process until the likes of *Illuminatus* arrived on the scene. With over 200 templates, it lets you create your own pages and links without any programming knowledge.

Like most desktop publishers, *Illuminatus* uses frames, allowing you to incorporate pictures, sound and video into presentations and multimedia publications. Buttons can be used to move to the next page, play an effect or launch another program. A very professional-looking result is possible with this package.

Every aspect of an *Illuminatus* screen is customisable, from the colour of the background to the size and shape of your boxes. If the supplied templates aren't quite right, you can alter them or create a new template from scratch. The finished product can be run on your machine or written to disks or CDs and distributed freely. With CD production costs coming down all the time, home multimedia is rapidly becoming a viable market. Look out for *Illuminatus* V.3, available soon. **80%**



Business and Productivity

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BNB-NBB Koch Media Ltd. A financial database covering 140,000 companies under Belgian law	01252 714340	£2467.50
Business Calls Xebec Multimedia Aims to improve telephone skills and competence	01453 835482	£1350.00
Business Communications Xebec Multimedia Non-verbal communications, questioning and assertiveness skills	01453 835482	£1350.00
Business in Motion LTS Ideal for illustrating presentations and teaching/training material	01386 792617	£69.32
Business Words Xebec Multimedia Practical writing and editing skills for business letters and reports	01453 835482	£1350.00
CD-Speed Data Becker A CD-ROM accelerator for DOS and Windows	01420 22707	£29.95
Civil War Guildsoft A massive database with movies, facts, photographs and stories	01752 895100	£52.82
Companies International Gale Research Provides descriptive data on over 1/4 million major world companies	01734 583247	£1762.50
DAFNE Koch Media Ltd. Analysis software which enables custom-made reports to be prepared	01252 714340	£2878.75
Data Manager Lite Data Becker Holds up to two billion records and multiple index capability	01420 22707	£12.95
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Diane (Disc 1) Koch Media Ltd. Disc 1 contains details of the top 120,000 companies	01252 714340	£3760.00

Diane (Disc 2)
Koch Media Ltd. 01252 714340 £2937.50
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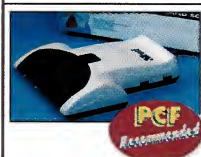
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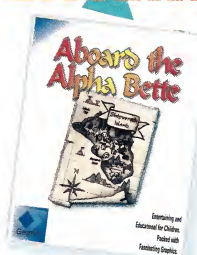
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Packed with Fascinating Graphics and Sound. Ages 5 - 11

Dept. 24 Guildford St. Luton, Beds. LU1 2NR. Tel: 01582 401480 (24hrs)
All at £14.99 inc p&p. Programs require MS-Windows™ 3.1 or MS-DOS 5.0B, 4Mb RAM, SoundBlaster™ optional.



Cartoon Carnival

Publisher Philips Media
Tel 0171 911 3000

Featuring the wonderful creations of the Hanna-Barbera studio, *Cartoon Carnival* is a bright and breezy children's game collection. Among the famous cartoon cast are Fred Flintstone, Scooby Doo and Yogi Bear. Each has a game based around some aspect of their cartoon lives, for example, the ever hungry Yogi has to deal with problematic picnic baskets in a memory test. In between each game are animated intermissions that break up the action and provide some classic entertainment.

The ultimate object is for the child to win each of the 15 sub-games; winning a game will highlight one of the letters in the words *Cartoon Carnival*. Each game is played with the mouse and the game mechanisms are all simple enough to keep kids interested.

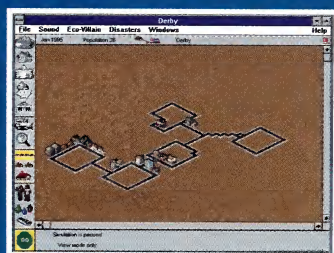
Cartoon Carnival oozes quality and the bright graphics and dynamic sound are very appealing. However, there is not much in the way of education to be had and the trivia quiz seems a little out of place in a product aimed at improving thinking and co-ordination, but otherwise this should keep the kids entertained and occupied for a while. **85%**



Multimedia Studio Freehand Ltd.	01483 457000	£450.00
In an single presentation, you have an array of multimedia options		
Multipacker Data Becker	01420 22707	£12.95
Compress files with the ease of drag and drop		
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Professor Multimedia Channel MarketMakers	01703 812755	£82.19
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Rescue Pow! Distribution	01202 716726	£99.95
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A daily planner to keep track of your appointments, etc		
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An entertaining scheduler for busy people		
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Kids and Early Learning

Adventures in Storybook Land Pan European	0171 916 5301	£19.99
Child's introduction to use of the mouse; three to five years		
Adventures of Nikko Mindscape	01444 246333	£29.99
Create a magical story with no prior computer knowledge needed		
Animal Alphabet Psygnosis	0151 709 5755	£29.99
A-Z to a wacky world of wildlife (for kids)		
Arthur's Teacher Trouble Electronic Arts	01753 549442	£39.99
This storybook features animations, realistic sounds and original music		
Body Park TecMagic	0171 466 3282	£40.00
Explore the human body in great detail		
Cartoon Carnival Philips Media	0171 911 3000	£24.99
Join the best cartoon characters in this multi-game product		
Cartoon Jukebox Philips Media	0171 911 3000	£24.99
Kids can sing along and watch the cartoon animations of popular tunes		
The Circus Koch Media	01252 714340	£40.00
A multiple games disc with plenty to keep the children interested		
Colours Pan European	0171 916 5301	£19.99
Explains the use of colours including many tests and games		
Creative Writer Microsoft	01734 270001	£45.00
An impressively featured word processor, completely geared to children		
Dandy Dinosaurs Kamco Computer Systems	01895 271919	£39.99
Unique children's programme that contains video with three separate modules		
Director's Lab CIC	0181 563 4013	£50.00
Ideal for treating videos complete with titles, sound and music		
Fine Artist Microsoft	01734 270001	£50.00
Contains tutorials which teaches art techniques such as perspective		
Fun School In Dreamland Europress	01625 859333	£30.00
This disc includes basic spelling and maths and other important fun		
Jumpstart Kindergarten Guildsoft		£51.00
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Junior Discovering Authors Gale Research	01734 583247	£323.13
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Kid Works 2 ABLAC Learning Works	01626 332233	£39.95
A creativity kit that paints, writes and talks, for children		
Kid's Encyclopedia Guildsoft	01752 895100	£45.00
This fun fact-book is full of knowledge and information		
Magic Bus Explores the Solar System Microsoft	0345 002000	£50
Guided tour and lots of information on our Solar System		
Magic Theatre Guildsoft	01752 895100	£44.95
Children can create, animate, draw and produce computer movies		
Mario is Missing Mindscape	01444 246333	£24.99
Part of the Edutainment Series - this is both fun and educational		
Mario Teaches Sums Mindscape	01444 246333	£24.99
A fresh, fun and fascinating way to develop numerical skills		
Mario Teaches Words Mindscape	01444 246333	£24.99
Develops a child's understanding of language and words with fun		
Mario's Playschool Mindscape	01444 246333	£24.99
This will help with new and exciting concepts		
Mario's Time Machine Mindscape	01444 246333	£24.99
Help Mario stop Bowser from stealing history's important moments		
Math Blaster - "Spot" ABLAC Learning Works	01626 332233	£39.95
Encourages children to practice and improve their maths skills		
Memphis Math: Treasure of the Tombs Novell (UK) Ltd.	01344 724460	£49.00
Takes children on an adventure in search of several tombs		
My First Incredible, Amazing Dictionary Dorling Kindersley	0171 753 3488	£49.00
Most revolutionary new system yet devised for your child to read		
PB Bear's Birthday Party Dorling Kindersley	0171 836 5411	£39
Wonderfully animated story from the masters		
Peter Pan: Painting Adventure Electronic Arts	01753 549442	£39.99
Children can control events in the tale they are reading		
Putt Putt Joins The Parade Electronic Arts	01753 549442	£39.99
Lots more fun and adventure for your child		
Puzzles Pan European	0171 916 5301	£14.99
Each puzzle contains picture solving with unlimited possibilities		
Read With Me 1 & 2 Novell (UK) Ltd.	01344 724460	£49.00
Combines both titles with additional multimedia capabilities and effects		
Rodney's Fun Screen Activision	0181 742 9400	£19.99
Creative, entertaining and educational		
Ruff's Bone Electronic Arts	01753 549442	£34.99
Comical story where children are taken on an exciting adventure		
Scavenger Hunt ABLAC Learning Works	01626 332233	£39.95
Creates a different and fun learning adventure every time		



Sim Town

Publisher Maxis
Tel 01752 490 2333

• *Sim Town* lets younger gamers enjoy the same kind of challenges that older folks took on when they picked up the *Sim City* bug. With a smaller scale and a more personal approach, *Sim Town* gives you an empty patch of land to construct a dream town. But it is not as simple as just slapping down the concrete, you have to take into account all the environmental aspects and how happy your residents are with their surroundings.

If you want, you can start with a pre-built town which will demonstrate the different types of problems you will encounter. Aside from housing, work places, leisure facilities and beautification, you'll also have to think about road systems, community issues and natural resources.

Everything in the game costs credits, to earn credits you have to build a town good enough to win awards. You can get an idea of how you are progressing with the diaries of your residents and the headlines in the local papers. Against you in your endeavours are the Eco-villains who are out to damage your resources, random or can be called up from the menu, there are also natural disasters to contend with including fires, earthquakes and drought. None of which are good for a growing town.

The best feature of *Sim Town* is that it lets you keep an eye on individuals. People keep diaries and develop interests giving the game a very personal flavour which kids will love while parents will see their children learning some valuable lessons. **90%**

Scooter's Magic Castle

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £39.99
Each activity reinforces a skill such as, counting, keyboarding, etc

Shapes

Pan European 0171 916 5301 £19.99
Child's product that explains triangles, squares, rectangles and circles

Sim Town

Maxis 01752 490 2333 £34.95
Takes a more personal and environmental look at urban construction

Sing-A-Long Kids Classics

Dr T's Music Software 01752 895100 £39.95
Welcome this blend of song and storybook into your home

Sound It Out Land

ABLAC Learning Works 01626 332233 £34.95
A program that lets children sing along with friendly characters

Spider-Man Cartoon Maker

Random House 0171 973 9750 £29.00
Do-it-yourself animator based on the Webbed Wonder

T.J Finds a Friend

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £39.99
Contains safety lessons to avoid being abducted

Teddy The Brave

Mindscape 01444 246333 £24.99
This is an inventive action and thinking game

Teddy's Hide and Seek

Mindscape 01444 246333 £29.99
Contains a great number of game and learning activities

The Escape Of Marvin The Ape

Asymetrix 0171 454 1061 £29.95
Work your way through his story as he experiences city life

The Legends of Oz

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £34.99
This classical film is now on CD-ROM to enjoy

The Manhole

Activision 0181 742 9400 £19.99
Holds a world of imagery and adventure with unrelenting fun

The Multimedia Language System Junior (4 yrs +)

Infogrames 0171 738 8199 £29.99
Learn a foreign language in a fun and easy way

The Shoe People - Their First Adventure

MPEG Limited 01924 457138 £12.99
Animated video cd about the shoe people

The Shoe People - Their Second Adventure

MPEG Limited 01924 457138 £12.99

The Shoe People - Their Third Adventure

MPEG Limited 01924 457138 £12.99

The Treasure Hunt

Omnimedia (UK) Ltd. 0181 974 6766 £34.99
Treasure Hunt features the adventure story of eight pirate mice

Thumbelina

Domark 0181 780 2222 £19.99
An interactive fairy tale for three to nine year olds

Thumbelina

Time Warner Interactive 01604 602800 £40.00
This multimedia storybook tells the popular fairy tale

Wallobee Jack: The Bingl Burra Stone

Word Perfect UK 01932 850505 £29.00
This colourful cartoon will take children on an exciting adventure

Widget Workshop

Maxis 0171 490 2333 £34.95
Create strange machines and devices with this fun construction kit

Wonderbrush

Pan European 0171 916 5301 £24.99
A child's painting programme for ages four to seven

Zargon Zoo

Romedia Interactive 01703 871177 £39.95
Based on a bunch of aliens who kidnap a little boy

Graphics and Presentation

3-D Design Plus 2.0

FastCAD Europe Ltd. 01923 246427 £586.33
Drawing tools and extensive library with 100 pre-drawn objects

100 Beautiful Landscapes

Andromeda Interactive 01235 529595 £44.06
Images from around the world presented in photo CD landscape

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Collection of TrueType fonts for Windows; makes Window documents unique

4000 Icons

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £14.99
Colourful and creative icons for all your Windows applications

7000 Clip Art Images

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £14.99
Clip art images you can use either in DOS/Windows

Art Collection

Data Becker 01420 22707 £10.95
Display the works of art of Monet, Van Gogh, Michelangelo and more

Art Manager

Data Becker 01420 22707 £14.95
Allows you to store and view

Asymedia

Aysmetrix 01844 201200 £259.00
Multimedia presentations are available on this disc at a much lower cost

Best of Stock Video

LTS 01386 792617 £92.82
Adds impact to illustrating presentations and teaching/training material

Cartoon Collection

Data Becker 01420 22707 £10.95
Create your own cartoons for your newsletter or posters

CD Blaster

Computer Manuals 0121 706 6000 £35.25
Collection includes cartoon animation, movie clips and photographs

CD Cad

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £24.99
Contains a symbols library with 333 layers of drawing power

Clip art 2

Data Becker 01420 22707 £10.95
Over 100 examples of ready to use, professionally created clip art

Complete House

BTL Publishing 01274 841320 £35.24
A design tool and multimedia exploration of residential architecture

CorelDRAW! 4

Market Makers 01703 812755 £395.00
All information about the complete PC graphics package

Crystal Flying Fonts Version 3 for Windows

LTS 01386 792617 £229.13
Creates animated 3-D titles and logos

Dino Screen Saver

Data Becker 01420 22707 £9.95
Allows you to customise the background and dinosaur mix

Diskcomix

Pan European 0171 916 5301 £29.99
The ability to compile animations and sound stories

Doodlemation

Guildsoft 01752 895 100 £19.95
Take a trippy time out with this strange graphics creator package

Do It On Your Desktop

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £35.22
Amazing backdrops, fonts and graphics featured in dialog boxes

Expert Home Design Gold for Windows

Software Partners 01954 206626 £39.99
Your dream home can now come true with this package

Font Maker v2

Derval Computer Services Ltd. 01386 750033 £99.88
Lets you create your own desired fonts for any occasion

Fractal Ecstasy

BTL Publishing 01274 841320 £41.12
Design superb and beautiful images; a unique tool

Garden of Uearthly Delights

Nimbus 01633 867777 £29.38
New style of art called Evolutionism; created by William Latham

Gif Galaxy

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £24.99
Contains thousands of high quality, high resolution pictures

Graphics Animation Festival

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £24.99
Contains 100's of full colour, full motion, multimedia 3-D animation

Grooves

Psychosis 0151 709 5755 £39.99
Collection of 90 high quality audio clips for multimedia presentations

HiJaak Graphics Suite for Windows

LTS 01386 792617 £139.83
An updated, extended version of HiJaak Pro



HSC Digital Morph
Pan European 0171 916 5301 £69.99
A morphing and warping package for any image or purpose

Image Warehouse
Psygnosis 0151 709 5755 £39.99
A collection of Royalty clip art, textures, backgrounds and graphic resources

Leonardo
Visual Reality 01734 753477 £495.00
A 3-D modelling, rendering and photo realistic animation program

Magic Eye
Mindscape 01444 246333 £24.99
Amazing 3-D Stereograms with the chance to create your own

Media Blitz
Aysmetrix 01844 201200 £89.00
Edit, arrange and synchronise sound, graphics & animation

Microsoft Art Gallery
Microsoft 01734 270001 £44.44
From the National Gallery's in-house Point of Information system

Morphology 101
LTS 01386 792617 £45.83
A morphing package for beginners that contains a Photomorph Lite

Movie Clips Screen Saver
Astrion 0181 2020011 £39.95
Over 200 famous and obscure video clips to adorn your screen

Multimedia Screen Saver
Aysmetrix 01844 201200 £19.99
Collection of 25 screen savers including the planets, Christmas, etc

Photo Library
Quadra Communications 01488 683936 £164.50
Images in five resolutions from thumbnail to the very extreme

PhotoMorph
LTS 01386 792617 £116.33
Lets you change one image into another via manipulation and distortion

PhotoMorph 2
LTS 01386 792617 £116.33
The second edition is now available to morph even more images

Picture Library - Volume 1
Animated Pixels Ltd. 01705 291866 £39.95
Five hundred professionally scanned colour images

Raytrace Designer
Data Becker 01420 22707 £14.95
Collection of pre-defined objects - displays up to 16 million colours

Rock 'n' Roll Your Own
Bastion 0171 490 1323 £34.99
Create your own R&R songs and play them with video backing

RoMaterial
Guildsoft 01752 895100 £35.22
Icons that move, goofball gadgets, etc. have been included

Scenic Skills
LTS 01386 792617 £45.82
Includes striking photographic backgrounds and well known locations

SFX-Sound Effects
Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £29.99
Contains 300 digitally recorded sound effects for MPC applications

Solid CAD
Data Becker 01420 22707 £14.95
Includes pre-defined geometric objects and furniture models

Sound Studio
Data Becker 01420 22707 £14.95
Create your own music with Sound Studio's recording system

Super Show & Tell
LTS 01386 792617 £116.32
Create multimedia presentations with sights, sounds and motions

Take Your Best Shot
7th Level 01223 425 558 £24.99
Enter the insane and painful world of MTV's most wounded characters

Tempest
Data Becker 01420 22707 £13.95
Manage your DOS programs and files quickly and easily

Tempra Access Plus
Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £47.10
Bring photo-quality images to computers with other multimedia options

The Residents' Gingerbread Man
BMG 0171 973 0011 £39.99
Totally over the top multimedia presentation of music and image

Wicked Sounds
Data Becker 01420 22707 £14.95
Attach a sound to any of 12 different events

Wizpak 6
Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £9.99
Over 170 programmes from animations to arcade and educational games

Word Perfect Clip art Premium Collection
Word Perfect UK 01932 850505 £59.00
Artwork which is useful in incorporating into lots of documents

Working Stills
LTS 01386 792617 £45.82
Features sharp and stunning photographs of business and industry

Science and Nature

3-D Dinosaur Adventure
Guildsoft 01752 895100 £44.95
This program is a must for all keen dino fans

A World Alive
Softline 0181 401 1234 £35.00
Nature documentary with the voice of James Earl Jones

Behind the Scenes: The Zoo
Media Design Interactive 01252 737630 £39.99
Go behind the scenes of a modern zoological park

A Brief History of Time
WH Freeman & Co 01865 726975 £59.00
Stephen Hawking's book plus multimedia to demonstrate his theories

Blown Away
Daze Marketing 0171 372 7435 £39.99
Solve puzzles in order to save your family from an explosive death

Bug Adventure
Guildsoft 01752 895100 £44.95
Inviting, interactive journey into the creepy, crawly world of insects

Butterflies of the World
Media Design Interactive 01252 737630 £44.99
Fascinating look at these beautiful and colourful flying insects

Chemistry Set
Cambridge CD-ROM Ltd 01449 774658 £150.00
Over 350 chemistry experiments presented in great detail

Complete Physics
Koch Media 01252 714340 £249.00
The basic principles of physics on three CDs

Creepy Crawlies
Media Design Interactive 01252 737630 £29.99
Inside facts on 74 of the most horrible creepy creatures

Cute 'n' Cuddlies
Media Design Interactive 01252 737630 £29.99
Definitive multimedia guide to the creatures we love to love

Dangerous Creatures
Microsoft 0345 002000 £45.00
Loads of facts and video to illustrate our most dangerous neighbours

Dr Ruth's Encyclopedia of Sex
CentreGold 0121 356 3388 £19.99
A simple sex guide from the famous eccentric

Dinosaur Adventure
Guildsoft 01752 895100 £44.95
Hundreds of colour pictures, maps and other interesting facts

Dinosaurs! The Multimedia Encyclopedia
Media Design Interactive 01252 737630 £39.99
Almost every question is answered about these fascinating creatures

Earth & Universe
BTL Publishing 01274 841320 £39.99
Packed with information on the Earth and its surroundings

Electricity & Magnetism
BTL Publishing 01274 841320 £39.99
Interactive explanations of all aspects; G.C.S.E. level and beyond

Energy Resources
BTL Publishing 01274 841320 £39.99
All types of energy source with environmental questions

Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Nature
Dorling Kindersley 0171 753 3488 £69.00
The animal world gets the DK treatment in this colourful, guide

Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Science
Dorling Kindersley 0171 753 3488 £99.00
More than 170 main subjects are organised into four major categories

Global Learning
Mindscape 01444 246333 £59.99
Uses new technology to teach reference material

In The Company of Whales
Astrion 0181 202 0011 £39.99
Take a dip into the big blue with these wondrous aquatic mammals



Rock 'n' Roll Your Own

Publisher Bastion
Tel 0171 490 1323

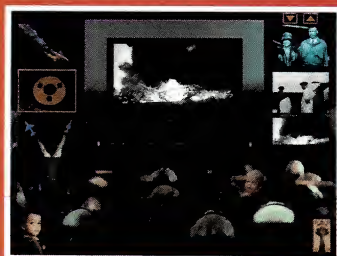
• Music has always been a part of the human communicative experience, and now you can make your own music without even the slightest bit of talent. *Rock 'n' Roll Your Own* features eight tracks, each of which consists of a backing song and a range of samples which you can arrange in a suitable order or trigger from the keyboard.

The titles range from the interesting 'I Want More' to the cliché ridden 'Real Bad Boy' and cover the whole spectrum of modern music from rock to rap and reggae.

Each track is accompanied by a video, some of which seems suitable to the track while other clips seem very out of place. Naturally, you can save your masterpieces for later.

If you want you can sample in your own vocal clips through a microphone and add these onto the tracks. *Rock 'n' Roll* has always been about the spirit of rebellion, but this package is about as rebellious as Horlicks. That aside, this is a reasonable package containing live action video recordings and animation in interesting mixtures. **60%**





Aviation Adventure

Publisher Guildsoft
Tel 01752 895100

• A product sure to please plane spotters everywhere, *Aviation Adventure* offers you the chance to look through the years of air history. This Windows program covers both military and civil aviation, allowing you to look at previous generations of aircraft in the museum or view footage covering a variety of themes including disasters and pilots in the theatre.

A couple of simple aviation games are included, but the most entertaining feature is the make your own paper aeroplane section which has a variety of models for you to build. See if you can make a paper aeroplane that can fly longer and further than any other. Another feature of the package is the aviation lab which allows you to take apart various aircraft including the V-1 Flying Bomb, Harrier GR-7 and the Space Shuttle.

Other sections include the careers section informing you about jobs in the aviation industry from pilots to ground staff, and the reference section which contains a time-line showing the development of aviation and some interesting information on Russian and American secrets during the cold war. Finally, there is a quiz to see if you've learnt anything new.

Aviation Adventure tackles a huge body of information and manages to present a small section of it very well. While more detail could have been shoe-horned onto the disc in place of some less interesting sections, it is still quite an informative product.

80%



Interactive Periodic Table

Attica 01865 791346 £99.00
Multimedia put to good use illustrating the periodic table

Inventors & Inventions

Academy Television 01532 461528 £152.75
An interactive library of inventions in science, design and technology

Joy of Sex

Philips Media 0171 911 3000 £39.99
Another guide to making love. This one comes with a book

Redshift

Maris Multimedia 0171 488 1566 £70.00
Highly detailed look at the solar system and its planets

Science 1: Elements

Academy Television 01532 461528 £152.75
Introduction to the periodic table and atomic structure

Science 11: Materials

Academy Television 01532 461528 £152.75
A lively investigation of chemical materials

Space Shuttle

Digital Integration 01276 678806 £15.00
An interactive look at the space shuttle and its missions

Speed

Computer Manuals 0121 706 6000 £45.00
The history and science of speed given the multimedia treatment

The Animals

Mindscape 01444 246333 £39.99
Learn about various mammals, birds and reptiles in the animal kingdom

The Daily Telegraph

Word Games for Windows 01702 468029 £24.95
For crossword fans who feel something is missing from their PCs

The Environment: Land & Air

Academy Television 01532 461528 £152.75
A balanced, in-depth look at global issues

The Environment: Water

Academy Television 01532 461528 £152.75
The UK's first CD that investigates water usage through history

The Living Body - an atlas

BTL Publishing 01274 841320 £233.82
Huge collection of material on the body

Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus

Harper Collins Interactive £29.99
Male-female relationship difficulties explained in this unusual program

Pleasures of Sex

Telstar 01932 222232 £39.99
This explicit CD takes you on a tour of the sexual act

Oceans Below

Digital Integration 01276 678806 £15.00
Explore life under the waves

The Ultimate Human Body

Dorling Kindersley 0171 753 3488 £79.00
An amazing trip into the secret world of the human body

Undersea Adventure

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £44.94
An imaginative program that stimulates thought about marine life

Whales & Dolphins

Media Design Interactive 01252 737630 £49.99
Explore the world of these warm-blooded mammals

Wolf Hollow

LTS 01386 792617 £45.83
Interactive multimedia CD designed to educate and entertain

Cute 'n' Cuddlies

Media Design Interactive 01252 737630 £29.99
Definitive multimedia guide to the creatures we love to love

20th Century Almanac

Mindscape 01444 246333 £79.99
Discover what happened in this day in history

Encyclopedia and Reference

3D Atlas

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £64.99
A vast encyclopedia of crucial information and trivia about our planet

100 Classic Cars

Andromeda Interactive 01235 529595 £44.06
A hundred photo images of classic cars on one CD

100 Years of Motoring

Koch 01205 714 340 £39.99
A guide through the evolution of the modern motor car

1994 Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia

Mindscape 01444 246333 £139.00
For those who need truly comprehensive and in-depth information

A Line in the Sand

BTL Publishing 01274 841320 £35.24
Chronicle of the Gulf War, with information on reports, weapons, etc

A Passion for Art

Maxis 0171 490 2333 £49.99
Examines the collection of Dr. Albert Barnes, modern art lover

Adventures

BTL Publishing 01274 841320 £45.83
Adventures and unusual travel experiences throughout the world

America's Civil War

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £52.82
Answers all the questions that anyone has on the Civil War

Americans in Space

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £39.99
Over 500 narrated photos in vivid colour and one hour FMV

Apollo 13

Deverill Business Systems 01202 735139 £37.50
The story of the near-disastrous Apollo 13 mission

Ancient Lands

Microsoft Home 0345 002000 £40.00
A beautiful guide to all the ancient civilisations

Art Gallery

Microsoft 01734 270001 £58.75
Art in London's National Gallery is available for private enjoyment

Astronomer CD-ROM

Software Partners 01954 206 626 £30
Search the skies and learn of mankind's fascination with stars

Aviation Adventure

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £45.00
Encyclopedia of aviation including games and a flight sim

Beethoven's 5th

Mindscape 01444 246333 £39.99
Experience music and video as never before

Better Homes and Gardens CD Cookbook

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £39.99
Provides a definitive listing on literally 100's of recipes

Biography and Genealogy Master Index CD-ROM

Gale Research 01734 583247 £1116.25
Citations for 8.8 million biographies on over 3 million people

Bob Dylan Highway 61 Interactive

Weinerworld 0171 753 3593 £79.00
Take a voyage through the works and life of Mr. D and his friends

Bodyworks 3.0

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £58.69
Explore the system, structures and functions of the human body

Book Bank CD-ROM

J Whittaker and Sons 0171 836 8911 £1433.00
Over 700,000 records of books published in the UK and abroad

Book Review Index on CD-ROM

Gale Research 01734 583247 £1204.38
Tool for those needing to find information on a text/writer

Capitol Hill

Mindscape 01444 246333 £39.99
Make headline news as you are sworn in as congressman/woman

CD Cookbook - Healthy Cooking

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £39.99
Over 400 recipes and comprises a food index

CIA: The Secret Files

CD Vision 0171 240 7764 £40.00
The secret history of the CIA in video, pictures and sound (MPEG)

Cartoon History of the World Vol 1-7

Putnam New Media 001 703 860 3375 £39.99
World history up to 300BC told in cartoon form on two CDs

Changing Times

Koch Media 01252 826868 £167.00
15,000 original reports in this archive from The Times

Chinese Horoscope

Data Becker 01420 22707 £12.95
Based upon phases of the moon; predict the future and more

City 2000

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £41.11
Provides an excellent armchair tour of London's sights

Collins Electronic English Dictionary & Thesaurus

Harper Collins 0181 7417070 £65.00
Handy tool when searching for the meaning/spelling of a word



Bioforge

Publisher Electronic Arts
Tel 01753 549442

• One of the hit adventure games of the year has been *Bioforge*. The gameplay is of a similar style to *Alone In The Dark* with multiple camera angles for each location and texture mapped 3-D graphics.

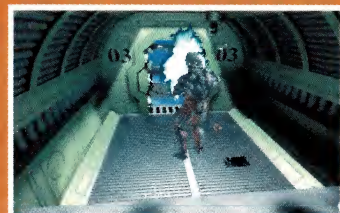
Taking the role of a half-man, half-machine creature, you must escape from the insane professor and body butcher who created the monstrous being you have become. The graphics are some of the most impressive seen on the PC with hugely impressive cut-scenes and great sound effects.

By far the best thing about *Bioforge* is the non-linear plot. There is no set order in which you have to perform actions despite the underlying impetus of the story. You can play through the game in a logical way or can race through the myriad of rooms in a mad rush.

The puzzles that lie ahead range from the simple to the fiendish and you can engage your captors in beast to beast combat, using all kinds of implements as weapons including severed limbs.

The mix of gameplay styles makes *Bioforge* a joy to play, and the sound and graphics combine to produce an electric atmosphere. This is an excellent game that will keep you amused and occupied for hours on end. Definitely one that has lasting value and is worth adding to any gamer's collection.

92%



The Daily Telegraph 1992

Attica 01865 791346 £150
Provides a comprehensive collection of news items and feature articles

The Encyclopedia of Life

Gazelle Technologies 0101 619 693 4030 £99.95
Guide to the world of animal life with fascinating facts

The Mastery of Michelangelo

E.M.M.E. Interactive 01923 210 992 £39.00
A high resolution look at the works of one of the world's great artists

The New Dictionary of the Living World

Media Design Interactive 01252 737630 £39.99
This is an invaluable addition to any reference collection

The Story of the World Cup

Attica 01865 791346 £58.74
A game full of footie nostalgia

The Viking Opera Guide

Attica 01865 791346 £69.33
Savour the delights of opera with a wide variety of choices

The Way Things Work

Dorling Kindersley 0171 753 3488 £79.00
Inventions from lasers to light bulbs come to life like magic

The World of the Vikings

TAG Developments 01474 357350 £69.33
Everything you have always wanted to know about Vikings

The Zoo

Psygnosis 0151 709 5755 £39.99
Insight of the running of a modern zoological park

UFO

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £52.82
A must for anyone who believes we are not alone

Undersea Adventure

Guildsoft 01752 895100 £44.94
An imaginative program that stimulates thought about marine life

Videohound Multimedia

Gale Research 01734 583247 £77.55
Gives avid video watchers data on 52,000 films and 22,000 stars

Vietnam: A Visual Investigation

Computer Manuals 0121 706 6000 £41.00
The story of the Vietnam War, with some fascinating insight

Viewpoint

CID Publishing Ltd. 0171 379 3838 £146.88
Makes life a lot simpler when needing the right hotel

Warbirds

DBS 01202 722554 £25.00
A database of video, sound and pictures of military aircraft

Wines of the World

Kamco Computer Systems 01895 271919 £46.99
Get behind the scenes of wine making at famous vineyards

Woodstock 25th Anniversary

Time Warner Interactive 01604 602800 £29.99
Latest interactive technology recreates the great festival

World Atlas Version 4

Mindscape 01444 246333 £59.99
Amazing world fact book, almanac and atlas all in one

World War II Archives

Attica 01865 791346 £175.00
Produced in association with the Imperial War Museum

World War II: Global Conflict

Academy Television 01532 461528 £152.75
Encyclopedia of World War II with help from US National Archive

Yes Active

Compton's New Media 0171 490 1323 £19.99
Rock legends get an impressive multimedia airing

20th Century Art

Matra Hachette 0181 600 6000 £44.95
Sit back and watch a guided tour of the gallery of modern art

Games and Recreation

3 Worlds of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

Mindscape 01444 246333 £44.99
Compilation with Ravenloft, Al Qadim and Dark Sun, excellent value

10th Anniversary Anthology

Interplay 01235 821666 £49.99
Games that dominated the awards lists in industry are here

7th Guest

Virgin 0171 368 2255 £9.99
Prepare to be the unexpected 7th guest and await your peril

A IV Networks

Infogrames 0171 738 8199 £44.99
A complex sim of transport conglomerates in the world of high finance

Aces - The Complete Collectors Edition

Sierra On-Line 01734 303 322 £39.99
Bland by today's standards but the Aces games are still excellent fun

Aegis: Guardian of the Fleet

Time Warner Interactive 01604 602800 £49.99
Challenges you to interpret genuine declassified military information

Aces of the Deep

Sierra 01734 303322 £44.99
Most realistic and technically advanced WWII German U-boat simulation

Air Havoc Controller

Domark 0181 780 2222 £39.99
Take control of military and civilian aircraft

Alex Dampier Pro Hockey '95

Merit Studios 0191 385 7755 £39.95
EA Hockey with neat presentation but bad gameplay and dire control

Alien Legacy

Sierra 01734 303 322 £34.99
CD update of a space colonisation game, offers long term appeal

Arcade Trivia Quiz

Merit Software 0191 385 7755 £14.95
Three players can tax their general knowledge to the limit

Armored Fist

US Gold 0121 625 3366 £40.00
A battle simulation game with you as the commander

Atari 2600 Action Pack

Activision 0181 742 9400 £25.00
A total of 15 classic Atari games, including Seaquest & River Raid

Alone in the Dark 2

Infogrames 0171 738 81 £44.99
Puts right all the defects of Alone in the Dark 1

Alone in the Dark 3

Infogrames 0171 738 8199 £49.99
Carby is backing the last of the arcade adventure trilogy

Award Winners Platinum Edition

Empire Interactive 0181 343 7337 £34.99
Frontier, Lemmings and Civilisation offer months of classic gameplay

Battles of Destiny

Mirage 01260 299 909 £44.99
Destroy up to three opponents in this global conquest game

Battles of Time

UBI Soft Ltd. 0181 343 9055 £29.99
Great graphics, over 30 maps and easy to use interface

BC Racers

Core Design 01332 297797 £35.00
Arcade style racing game, lots of laughs

Beneath a Steel Sky

Virgin 0181 960 2255 £49.99
Adventure game including work of comic artist/writer Dave Gibbons

Betrayal at Krondor

Sierra 01734 303322 £39.99
This shows a new way of approaching role playing games

Bioforge

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £44.99
Amazing 3D graphics in this Alone in the Dark-style adventure

Blade Warrior

Merit Software 0191 385 7755 £14.95
An arcade adventure with atmospheric graphics and a detailed quest

Bloodnet

Microprose 01454 326 532 £39.99
You are a vampire, use your powers to conquer evil

Brett Hull Hockey '95

Accolade 0181 788 0200 £39.95
A crunching sports sim full of thrills, spills and violence on ice

Campaign

Empire Software 0181 343 9143 £19.99
War game with lots of good multimedia features, slightly complex

Central Intelligence

Ocean 0161 832 6633 £39.99
Take control of a covert mission to topple the US Government

Chaos Control

Philips 0171 911 3094 £39.99
Awful linear blaster - a conversion of a Philips CD-I game, of all things

Chaos Engine

Time Warner Interactive 0171 391 4300 £29.99
Excellent arcade game - reality is distorted by a machine gone wrong

Chessmaster 4000 Turbo
Mindscape 01444 246333 £39.99
Super graphics, good quality

Club Dead
Viacom 0181 563 4003 £49.99
Weird MTV adventure, cool stuff

Command & Conquer
Virgin Interactive 0171 368 2255 £44.99
Combat sim with plenty of strategy and fast paced gameplay

Commander Blood
Mindscape 01444 246333 £44.99
With a little help from your friends you can find out the meaning of life

Conquered Kingdoms
Mirage 01260 299 909 £44.99
Plunge into a medieval world to conquer Cascatia

Creature Shock
Virgin 0181 960 2255 £49.99
Breathhtaking scenery with some very unpleasant creatures

Crime Patrol
Mirage 01260 299 909 £44.99
American laser game where you play the role of a stateside cop

Cyberla
Interplay 01235 821666 £44.99
Great action adventure with good sound and music

CyberMan/MegaRace pack
Mindscape 01444 246333 £69.99
New version of *MegaRace* with the innovative features of *Cyberman*

Cyberwar
SCI 0171 585 3308 £49.99
The second visual, interactive installment in the Lawnmower Man trilogy

CyClones
Mindscape 01444 246333 £39.99
An alien race has unleashed an army of cybernetic warriors

Dark Forces
Virgin 0181-960 2255 £39.99
Superb Star Wars shoot'em-up, *Doom* style

Dark Legions
US Gold 0121 606 1800 £35.99
Strategy game featuring armies of intriguing monsters and spellcasters

Dark Sun: Shattered Lands
US Gold 0121 625 3388 £45.99
Try to avoid dying like a slave in a ruined world

Dark Sun: Wake of the Ravanger
Mindscape 01444 246333 £44.99
Await your challenge in the horror-filled wasteland of Athas

Darkseed
Cyberdreams 0171 328 3267 £44.99
The fate of the world lies in your hands

Dawn Patrol
Empire Software 0181 343 9143 £44.99
First World War flight simulator, with amazing graphics

Day of the Tentacle
Virgin 0171 368 2255 £9.99
Super comic book adventure featuring the voice of Woody Allen

Daedalus Encounter
Virgin 0181 960 2255 £44.99
Play alongside Tia Carrere in this neat interactive movie with puzzles

Death Gate
Accolade 0181 788 0200 £39.99
Incredible animated sequences and lush environments

Discworld
Sony Psygnosis 0151 709 5755 £44.99
Funny fantasy game based on Terry Pratchett's novels

D&D Fantasy Empires
US Gold 0121 606 1800 £35.99
A role playing strategy/action game of fantasy conquest

Dr Drago's Madcap Chase
Blue Byte 01604 232200 £49.99
PC Board game that comes complete with a joystick

Dragon Lore
Mindscape 01444 246333 £44.99
Track down a traitor who is summoning the force of Chaos

Empire Deluxe
US Gold 0121 606 1800 £35.99
Strategy game of world exploration and conquest with multiplayer support

Fade To Black
Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £44.99
A first person adventure game with vast amounts of atmosphere

Fighter Wing
Merit Studios 0191 460 6060 £39.95
Fly a variety of fighter aircraft in this average power-hungry simulation

Flight of the Amazon Queen
Time Warner Interactive 0171 391 4300 £39.99
Become an Indiana Jones clone in this amusing jungle adventure

Flight Unlimited
Virgin 0181 960 2255 £49.99
Flit like a swallow through the skies - without a missile in sight

Football Glory
Kompact 0143 840 004 £34.99
A neat little *Kick Off* style soccer game with a sense of humour

Front Lines
Impressions 0171 351 2133 £39.99
Impressive SVGA war game set in a violent future

Frontier - First Encounters
Gametek 01753 553445 £44.99
A sequel - but still plagued by problems and looks outdated

Full Throttle
LucasArts / Virgin 0181 960 2255 £44.99
Biker Ben must clear the gang's name in this excellent CD adventure

FX Fighter
Philips Media 0171 911 3094 £39.99
Fight for your world in 3D. Created with Argonaut's BRender system

Gabriel Knight
Sierra 01734 303322 £44.99
You're haunted by a curse that grows when you sleeps

Great Naval Battles III
Mindscape 01444 246333 £49.99
Subtitled *Fury in the Pacific*. Continues the fine tradition of this series

Great Naval Battles: North Atlantic
US Gold 0121 625 3388 £44.99
Command the British or German army in the North Atlantic

Gullyt
Sony Psygnosis 0151 709 5755 £39.99
Easy controls but fat graphics - play a criminal escorted by WPC

Gus Goes to Cybertown
Guildsoft 01752 895100 £29.95
Let Gus and the Cyberbuds take you on a learning experience

Hardball 4
Accolade 0181 788 0200 £39.99
The best baseball simulation, excellent visuals and commentary

Harpoon
Digital Integration 01276 67880 £14.99
Extremely accurate naval combat simulator, but a little dated

Heirs to the Throne
Mirage 01260 299 909 £44.99
It is your job to bring the kingdom together again

Hell Cab
Time Warner Interactive 01604 602800 £49.99
Experience a terrifying journey in a New York Taxi-Cab

Hell: A Cyberpunk Thriller
Gametek (UK) Ltd. 01753 553445 £39.99
Prove you're innocent of crimes you don't remember committing

Hi-Octane
Bullfrog 01483 579399 £44.99
Fast and frenetic arcade racer with loads of big guns and explosions

High Seas Trader
Impressions 0171 372 7435 £39.99
Rather old-fashioned trading game set in the days of empire building

Incredible Toons
Sierra 01734 303322 £34.99
A crazy strategic game that the whole family will love

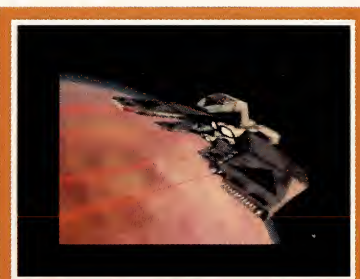
Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis
US Gold 0121 625 3388 £45.99
Only Indy can save the world from an atom bomb

Inferno
Ocean 0161 832 6633 £49.99
World of bizarre planets, asteroid fields and psychotic alien warriors

Inherit the Earth
US Gold 0121 606 1800 £44.99
Futuristic 3-D graphics adventure with a gripping story line

Interactive Hitting
Intelli Media Sports 0101 404 262 \$59.95 + P&P
All you ever wanted to know about this American sport

Ishar Trilogy
Daze Marketing 0171 372 7429 £29.99
Three role-playing games for the price of one; not bad for their age



The Daedalus Encounter

Publisher Virgin Interactive
Tel 0171 368 2255

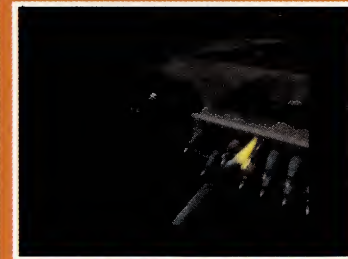
• Featuring the delectable Tia Carrere and some rough looking chap, *The Daedalus Encounter* is one of the first good examples of an interactive movie.

After an unfortunate accident, you bodily remains have been given a new lease of life in a probe like device. Your role in a crew of post-war salvage merchants, is to run ahead of your human counterparts and scout around, finding clues and generally exploring. Your first salvage operation begins with a rather nasty space wreck involving your craft and a huge alien vessel, and the mystery begins.

Between you and success are three CDs worth of puzzles and life threatening encounters. The acting and graphical effects are excellent (the game runs best in 65,000 colours).

The screen is laid out with your various control panels surrounding a view screen of the action. Aside from the gameplay, the tension between the two human characters makes *The Daedalus Encounter* more than just an ordinary title.

86%





Mortal Kombat II

Publisher Acclaim
Tel 0171 344 5000

• *Mortal Kombat II* is renowned around the gaming world as the game that introduced blood and guts to the console arena. There are twelve characters, each with their own personal motives carrying on from the original game, who are fighting it out in the Outworld for supremacy. The bloody bouts follow the standard first to two wins format.

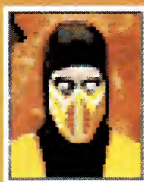
The digitised graphics have been carried over to the PC very well and the game moves as fast as the console versions on a decent 486. The fighting is fast and furious with each character having access to a wide array of special moves and combinations, some enable characters to fight from long range, others do vast amounts of damage.

But the final act of any bout is the fatality move. These are very difficult to pull off (a six button joypad is strongly recommended) but result in your vanquished opponent being dispatched in a grizzly way. The game is also loaded with secrets that add a certain depth to the basic action.

Everything from the arcade original is here and with the different difficulty levels and twelve characters to master, the challenge will last for some time.

Don't make the mistake of confusing this with the awful movie and keep an eye out for *Mortal Kombat III* which takes the story further..

86%



Jack Nicklaus CD

Accolade 0181 788 0200 £19.99
Sixteen courses, including U.S. Open and two 20th Century Videos

Jagged Alliance

Mindscape 01444 246 333 £39.99
Coming on like Cannon Fodder with strategy elements to gain victory

Jazz Jackrabbit

Epic Megagames 01767 260903 £34.99
Platform game with plenty of levels, brilliant gameplay

Jones in the Fast Lane

Epic Megagames 01767 260903 £44.99
Travel the game board of life in search of success

Jump

BMG Interactive 0171 973 0011 £44.99
Produced in collaboration with superstar David Bowie

Jump Raven

Computer Manuals 0121 706 6000 £59.00
It's your job to save the world from death and destruction

King's Quest VI

Sierra 01734 303322 £49.99
Uses professional actors for the voices of characters

Kyrandia 3

Virgin 0181 960 2255 £44.99
Amazing graphics and well-recorded sound, but poor humour

Lands of Lore

Virgin 0181 960 2255 £49.99
Enjoyable adventure with actors voice overs

Larry Collection

Sierra 01734 303322 £44.99
Larry is back again in a humorous and sexy adventure

Leisure Suit Larry VI

Sierra 01734 303322 £44.99
An adult adventure game with plenty of the usual smutty jokes

Lemmings Double Pack

Sony Psygnosis 0151 709 5755 £29.99
The original *Lemmings* plus over 200 levels of puzzling action

Lost Admiral

Mirage 01260 299 909 £44.99
Meet the challenge and regain your rank in the services

Lost Eden

Virgin 0181 960 2255 £34.99
Stunningly rendered adventure, but lacking in the adventuring stakes

Little Big Adventure

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £49.99
Fantastic adventure/action game

Magic Carpet

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £44.99
Land of mystery, swirling mists, majestic mountains and verdant valleys

Magic Carpet: Hidden Worlds

Electronic Arts 01485 579 399 £19.99
Uninspired update to the classic travelling rug sim with 25 new levels

Manchester United Premier League Champions

Krisalis Software Ltd. 01709 372290 £29.99
Become a professional footballer without the need of a football

Master of Orion

Microprose 0154 329 510 £16.99
Take the colonisation race into space and expand your empire

Mechwarrior II

Activision 0181 742 9400 £49.99
An exciting game that features super simulator 3-D graphics

Menzoberranzan

Mindscape 01444 246333 £00.00
This role-playing epic is fresh and exciting for all

MetalTech - Earthsiege

Sierra 01734 303322 £44.99
Invaded by intelligent Cybrids, Earth needs saving from their evil clutches

Microsoft Flight Simulator

Microsoft 01734 270001 £35.00
Flight activities that includes world travel with appropriate scenery

Microsoft Golf for Windows

Microsoft 01734 270001 £35.00
Play around the Torrey Pines Golf course

Montreuz the Clever Sheep

Microsoft 01734 700 2119 £124.99
Stunning arcade game - guide a sheep, eat grass and fight goats

Mortal Kombat II

Acclaim 0171 344 5000 £49.99
Buckets of blood and digitised death in this superb fantasy fight

Movie Clips Screen Saver

Astrion 0181 2020011 £39.95
More screen saver nonsense featuring American film stars

Myst

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £44.99
A game that requires skill and puzzle-solving to progress

NASCAR Racing

Virgin 0181 960 2255 £39.99
Fantastic racing game with brilliant graphics; requires a DX2

NHL Hockey '95

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £34.99
TV-style presentation makes the game more exciting

Noctropolis

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £49.99
Enter into a sinister cartoon world in a bid to prevent murder

Novastorm

Sony Psygnosis 0151 709 5755 £39.99
Sleek 3D space adventure, get blasting!

Oceans Below

Mindscape 01444 246333 £39.99
Introduction to the physical pleasure of diving, without getting wet

On The Ball - World Cup Edition

Ascon UK 0171 382 762 £12.99
Updated and out on budget - an impressive soccer management game

Overlord

Virgin 0181 960 2255 £44.99
Spitfires, Typhoons and Mustangs are included in this fantastic flight sim

Pagan Ultima VIII

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £49.99
The fate of all Britannia rests on your shoulders

Peaches

XDRA Distribution Ltd 01206 751143 £14.99
"Gorgeous calendar girls, with music"

PGA TOUR GOLF 486

Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £39.99
Features two new courses - TPC Summerlin and TPC River Highlands

Picture Perfect Golf

Empire 0181 343 7337 £44.99
High quality images of two courses spoilt by an average game of golf

Pinball Dreams Deluxe

21st Century 01235 851852 £39.99
Eight table pinball game, featuring all tables from *Pinball Dreams I and II*

Police Quest IV

Sierra 01734 303322 £44.99
An interactive problem-solving adventure game devised by the LAPD

Power Game II

Activision 0181 742 9400 £29.99
Action packed; Indianapolis 500, Gunship 2000 and Jet Fighter

Powerhouse

Impressions 0171 351 2133 £39.99
Take control of 21st Century electricity production

Prisoner of Ice

Infogrames 0171 498 7593 £44.99
Chilling adventure based on the works of gothic master H.P. Lovecraft

Psycho Pinball

Codemasters 01926814132 £49.99
Original video-based action game however unfocused

Pyrotechnica

Psygnosis 0151 709 5755 £29.99
Rescue teams of net runners in this interesting but limited shooter

Quest & Fun

UBI Soft Ltd. 0181 343 9055 £29.99
Consists Red Baron, Leisure Suit Larry V and King's Quest

Ravenloft

US Gold 0121 606 1800 £45.99
Full of stunning visuals and interior graphics

Ravenloft: Stone Prophet

Mindscape 01444 246 333 £44.99
Advanced Dungeons and Dragons role play game - get immersed

Re-elect JFK

Compton's New Media 0171 490 1223 £29.99
JFK isn't dead. In fact JFK is you and you want to stay that way

Red Crystal

Mirage 01260 299 909 £44.99
Use skill, magic and raw strength on your quest

Renegade Battle for Jacob's Star

Mindscape 01444 246 333 £39.99
Space combat - lacking the flair of *Tie Fighter* or *Wing Commander 3*

Return of the Phantom
Microprose 01454 326 532 £44.99
The phantom returns spelling mystery and confusion

Return to Zork
Activision 0181 742 9400 £49.99
A mesmerising interactive adventure of danger, intrigue and cunning

Reunion
Grandslam 0181 680 7044 £39.99
A world of space strategy, adventure, excitement and skill

Rise of the Robots
Mirage 01260 299 909 £49.99
Jaw-dropping graphics with the absorbing playability to match

Rise of the Triad
US Gold 00121 606 1800 £39.99
Ultra-violent 3D shoot'em-up from Apogee

Saga of Aces
Sierra 01734 303322 £44.99
Includes the entire great war planes series from Dynamix

Sam & Max
US Gold 0121 606 1800 £45.99
Hit The Road with these two weird but wonderful characters

Scottish Open: Virtual Golf
Core Design 01332 297792 £39.99
Take to the Carnoustie greens in this versatile arcade golf game

Shanghai
Activision 0181 742 9400 £34.99
A wonderful mental challenge for domino lovers everywhere

Simon the Sorcerer II
Adventuresoft 0121 352 0847 £44.99
Sequel to a fine adventure - bigger and better!

Slipstream 5000
Gremlin 01742 753 423 £39.99
Excellent racing game, recently outmoded by the likes of Hi-Octane

Space Hulk
Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £39.99
In the future, alien life forms threaten human existence

Spaceship Warlock
Reactor Inc. 0181 343 9055 £29.99
Megabytes of breathtaking art, animation, digitised sound and music

Star Control I & II
Accolade 0181 788 0200 £19.99
Fiction role-playing game that will keep you amused for hours

Star Crusader
Gametek (UK) Ltd. 01753 553445 £39.99
Decide which side of the galaxy you will fight for

Star Trek: 25th Anniversary
Interplay 01235 821666 £49.99
Role playing challenges and the thrill of 3-D space flight

Star Wars Chess
Mindscape 01444 246333 £49.99
Chess battle explosion

Star Wars: Rebel Assault
US Gold 0121 625 3388 £49.99
Just like starring in the movie, with realistic action

Stone Prophet
Mindscape 01444 246333 £44.99
Avoid the traps or face an early grave in this Egyptian adventure

Striker '95
Time Warner Interactive 01604 602800 £34.99
Arcade football with the emphasis on action, commentary by Andy Gray

SuperKarts
Virgin 0181-960 2255 £39.99
3D racing game with multi player action

Super Street Fighter II Turbo
Gametek 01753 553 445 £39.99
The fighting game that became a console legend. Simply superb

Syndicate Plus
Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £39.99
Corporate syndicates compete for global dominance in a dark, twisted world

Tank Commander
Domark 0181-780 2222 £39.99
Vickers Challenger II tank simulation

Ticonderoga
Mindscape 01444 246333 £39.99
Crew the US Navy's latest blaster

Tendo
Daze Marketing 0171 372 7435 £29.99
Interesting, colourful puzzle game based on a version of Mah-jong

Terminator Rampage
US Gold 0121 606 1800 £39.99
3-D shoot 'em up where you must fight the evil Terminator

The Adventures of Willy Beamish
Sierra 01734 303322 £44.99
Strange look at childhood as poor Willy endures an odd lifestyle

The Horde
US Gold 0121 625 3366 £44.99
A successful mixture of arcade and strategy gameplay

The Interactive Collection
Kixx 0121 625 3311 £49.99
Collection of 10 CDs containing 16 pieces of interactive software

The Labyrinth of Time
Electronic Arts 01753 549442 £39.99
As a hero you've been dropped into a timeless realm

The Last Dynasty
Sierra 01734 303322 £49.99
It's your job to save the Ultimate Knowledge from Evil Masters

The Lawnmower Man
SCI 0171 585 3308 £54.99
A virtual reality chiller that will fascinate and amaze

The Need For Speed
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Zork Anthology
Activision 0181 742 9400 £14.99
Compilation containing five of the legendary Zork text adventures



Super Street Fighter II Turbo

Publisher Gametek
Tel 01753 553 445

From the brooding animated introductory shots to the final victory scenes, *Super Streetfighter II Turbo* is a class product. With sixteen characters, *Turbo* offers more characters than its rival *Mortal Kombat II* and their widely varying size, speed and varied styles of confrontation makes for more interesting tournaments.

Each character has a mission to fulfil and a story to tell. The backgrounds are bright and heavily animated with bits of scenery that can take a beating in the melee.

The art of street fighting is in the combination moves, using different moves in rapid succession does more damage, and when the turbo bars at the bottom of the screen reach their maximum, some devastating moves can be pulled off.

With more characters and varied fighting styles, *Super Streetfighter II Turbo* comes out top against its great rival *Mortal Kombat II*, it is THE fighting game on the PC.

87%



In next Month's Issue!

▶▶▶ Flying high!

Flight sims are the favourite pastime of a lot of PC owners. We examine the genre in detail

▶▶▶ 'Planes on CD

Flight sims are not the only software for the aviation fanatic. We look at what else appeals

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Editor Tony Kaye
(tonyk@paragon.co.uk)
Art Editor Chris Matthews
Senior Staff Writer Geoff Spick
Contributors Neil King, John Dolan
John Hetherington,
Geoff Harris
Disc Compiler Alister Bulman
Ad Manager Diana Monteiro
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Systems Manager Alan Russell
Bureau Manager Chris Rees

Front Desk Marina Simpson
Sarah Cox
Subs 01202 200200
Fax: 01202 299955

Marketing Manager Michael Robinson

Publishing Director Pat Kelly
Art Director Mark Kendrick
Finance Director Trevor Bedford
Production Director Di Tavener
Managing Director Richard Monteiro

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Telephone 01202 299900
Facsimile 01202 299955
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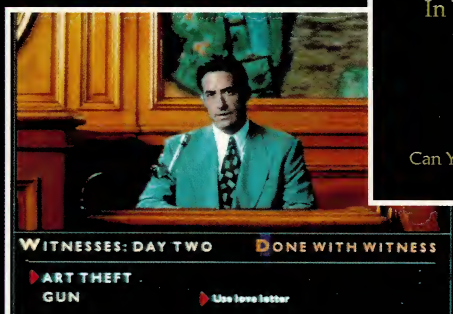
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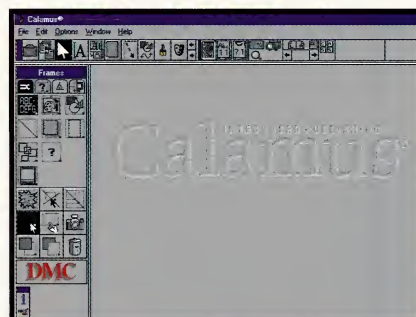
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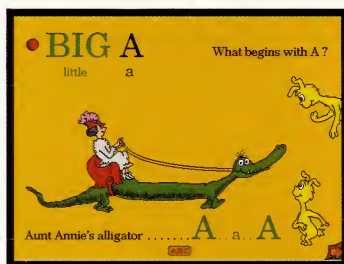
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